

THE CANADIAN FORUM

Thirtieth Year of Issue

June, 1950

Workers on Quality Street

► THE LARGEST-SCALE UNION organizing drive yet undertaken in Canada has been going on just over two years, almost without mention in the daily press. The reason for the conspiracy of silence is to be found in the full-page advertising which the T. Eaton Company, the employer involved, carries in the press of most major Canadian cities.

The campaign is centred on the Toronto operations of this retail octopus, which sprawls over three city blocks in the heart of downtown Toronto, another block at College Street, further uptown.

Everybody in Canada knows of Eaton's. Six million mail order catalogues pour out annually into every corner of the dominion. Eaton's chain of department stores and order offices are found in every large community. But probably few realize the significance of Eaton's in our economy. It is estimated that 7 per cent of Canadian purchasing power flows through its hands. Eaton's is the third largest employer of labor in Canada, topped only by the government and the railways. It sets the pace not only in consumer buying habits, but wields a heavy pressure in its own buying from suppliers. It has over a dozen subsidiary companies, and manufactures many of its own products, clothing, drugs, candies, luggage, lingerie, knitgoods, stoves, etc.

Of Eaton's 40,000 employees, some 13,000 are in Toronto. When the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union,

(Continued overleaf)

Age and Expendability

► THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE of Enquiry into Old Age Pensions is at work. A great deal of information which should have been available for study long ago is

now being prepared under the stimulus of this enquiry and presented to the Committee and to the people of Canada for study. Industrial pensions have begun to be an issue in collective wage bargaining. There is talk of the amount the monthly pension should provide and the age at which old-age pensions should start. At the same time there is proceeding in Washington a full-scale enquiry on the same subjects, as the Senate Committee on Finance holds public hearings on the proposed amendments to the Social Security Act in Bill H.R. 6000 approved in a standing vote by the House of Representatives last fall.

This is all very healthy and very desirable. It is also dangerous. Unless we are careful we shall find that we have concentrated so much attention on a

monetary pension and upon the financial, fiscal, constitutional, and administrative aspects of pension provision that

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SPEAKING OF FLOODS

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CIO-CCL, decided to tackle Eaton's two years ago, they chose to begin on the giant Toronto stores and mail order houses. No doubt they had in mind that if the biggest unit could be cracked, the rest would fall in line fairly easily. The task was considered too huge and important to leave to the resources of RWDSU, one of the smaller affiliates of the Canadian Congress of Labor. A special Department Store Organizing Committee was set up by the Congress, and included top leaders in the Congress, Pat Conroy, Fred Dowling, C. H. Millard, George Burt, Sol Spivak, Sam Baron, J. E. McGuire, Silby Barrett and T. B. MacLachlan, Canadian director of RWDSU. This has assured the drive both the interest of CCL unions across Canada and the financial backing required for such a long, expensive campaign. White collar workers are acknowledged to be the most difficult group to interest in unionization.

The union soon found the basis for their appeal to Eaton employees in the low wages, favoritism in promotions, five-and-a-half day week, insecurity on the job due to seasonal changes in personnel which rise from thirteen to seventeen thousand each Christmas. As soon as the first union leaflets were distributed at the dozen employee entrances at Eaton's in Toronto, employees began signing up in Local 1000, Department Store Employees' Union.

Eaton's were quick to see which way the wind was blowing. They began mending their fences with salary increases, time and one-half for overtime and looking into the grievances in various departments brought to light in the union's weekly bulletin, "Unionize." Local 1000 claims that every employee is better off by at least \$5 a week than when the campaign started, but that Eaton's will have to raise the ante a good deal higher to catch up with wages in organized industrial concerns and convince their employees that they can get a living wage without a union.

In the fall of the first year of organization, Eaton's brought out a long-mooted pension plan. Employees contribute 5 per cent of earnings and the company matches this. Editorials in Toronto lauded the plan at length. Local 1000 claimed credit for needling Eaton's into finally getting their pension plan out of the talk stage where it had been for ten years and into effect. Eligibility for the plan is limited to employees who are 30 years of age or over, and who have had five years' service. The union contends these restrictions limit participation in the plan to well below fifty per cent of the staff. Since the plan is contributory, the union program includes a demand for employee participation in administering it.

Other than such improvements in salaries and conditions, Eaton's have ignored the union as far as their house organ or other publications are concerned. However, it would seem that the complimentary articles about Eaton's and its multi-millionaire president, John David Eaton, which have appeared in popular magazines over the past year or so, were carefully timed.

Response to the union from employees has been slow but steady. From its first-published membership figures of 3,000 in March, 1949, Local 1000 has pushed the total up over the 5,000 mark, despite constant heavy losses due to turnover. The union estimates the turnover at over 20 per cent, and claims that this is indicative of dissatisfaction with salaries and promotional opportunities. Eaton's employ a large proportion of married women. Working at Eaton's has always been a stop-gap job for a good many younger people, while searching for better-paid employment.

The union has had to counteract the usual attitudes of white collar workers toward unionism—timidity, fear of

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Twenty-five Years Ago

Vol. 5, No. 57, June, 1925, *The Canadian Forum*.

An attack upon the Hydro-Electric System of Ontario was recently launched by Engineer Samuel Wyer, who is associated with the Smithsonian Institute at Washington. The *United States Congressional Record* states that "more than 170,000 copies of one publication summarizing the Wyer attack have been issued . . . and it is safe to say that they are going to distribute this little pamphlet by the million. . . . it contains many statements that cannot be verified . . . in fact there is very little in it that is not either misleading or absolutely untrue." These efforts, said Senator Norris in addressing the U.S. Senate, are made "to convince the people that Government operation of electric facilities is a failure, and that it is proven by the Smithsonian Institute, a governmental scientific agency." The pamphlet being circulated purports to be a summary of the findings of the Gregory Commission, but it neglects to quote the following from the report: "The principle of public ownership of the water powers of the Province and their development by the people, is, in our opinion, fundamentally sound and should be maintained at all hazards. The various plants are exceptionally well operated. That the organization is financially sound, there is not the slightest doubt."

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Water in Winnipeg

Whether or not the flood that has devastated southern Manitoba could have been prevented, is a question to which only an engineer should venture a reply. It may or may not have been an act of God, but the theologian and the layman should hesitate about becoming involved in the dispute that has already arisen. There are too many factors such as topography, climate, weather and resource-use affecting the behavior of the Red River for the man in the street to be able to express a useful opinion about it.

Irresistible as it may be to charge federal, provincial and municipal authorities with neglect, the claim of H. W. Harich, U.S. Corps of Engineers, that it would be impossible to control the Red by dams and uneconomic to build extensive dikes, may very well be true. Neglect seems to lie in failure to determine whether or not the flood could have been prevented, rather than in failure to prevent it.

Beyond this, several other things are certain. The first is that the people of Winnipeg have revealed an immense capacity for co-operative effort and mutual help. As a participant in the experience, we witnessed incidents that quickened the blood. With rare exceptions, the stories carried by the nation's press were virtual understatements. The comradeship and friendship developed on the dikes and in the evacuation centres and the taking in of entire families by strangers in unaffected parts of the city, will inevitably create a community spirit that will affect the future of Winnipeg.

It should also be clear that it is the duty of government on all levels, as representing the rest of the nation, to compensate the flood-victims to the full extent of their loss. Whoever may be at fault in causing the catastrophe, whether God or government, the people who by chance were living in the path of the flood were certainly not responsible. Voluntary fund raising for Manitoba Flood Victims will be good for the consciences of collector and contributor, but it will require government action immediately to save many homes from tragedy.

TOWARD FLOOD CONTROL

In dealing with water control, soil erosion, forest conservation and related problems, we Canadians are like youth—we seem able to learn important lessons only from bitter experience. Warnings, the experience of other countries and minor disasters are absorbed in public inertia, and a political philosophy of doing nothing until forced by public clamor. In Canada we are far worse in this regard than they are in the United States, especially since Franklin D. Roosevelt began in 1933 to give his country vigorous leadership in conservation matters. In addition, it is fair to say that to one in Canada, there are in the United States 100 private citizens of ability and substance who have made an intelligent study of these problems and are willing to do battle to prevent the further rape of their native land. The same ratio obtains among newspapers and men in public life. It is a sad commentary on Canadian citizens that those who have profited so much from the exploitation of our renewable natural resources, seem so little concerned that the next generation will inherit them with a greatly reduced potential—an unnecessary and wanton reduction.

The lack of leadership at the government level is particularly regrettable, because the public is so little organized in the interests of conservation. The people are, however, ready for leadership, and its absence since the abolition of the Conservation Commission of Canada in 1921 has cost the country billions of dollars.

Always the same pattern is followed by the politicians: spend little or nothing in advance to offset or prevent because "It is the taxpayers' money," and then when catastrophe strikes, assume the role of leader with assurance to the people "We (they mean you) shall spare no expense to repair the damage." It happened in 1948 in connection with the Mississauga-Chapleau fire which burned 1,000 square miles. A minimum of preparation in advance, despite the fact that the fire hazard had been increasing for a month, and when the fire came, a great expenditure of money with cloud sprinkling to induce rain and other widely publicized hysterics. God finally put the fire out by sending rain. The spruce budworm epidemic, which has destroyed half a million dollars worth of wood since 1933, is another example.

Little is to be gained by recrimination, least of all by an "I told you so" attitude toward suffering fellow-citizens, unless it points a lesson for the future. But it should be said that, despite the very serious flooding by the Red River in Manitoba in 1948, a visitor to Winnipeg on May second, 1950 (two weeks after serious floods were predicted) saw very little evidence of any preparation for the oncoming crest, and certainly no all-out preparation or feverish activity. "Wait and see" seemed to be the general attitude. Not that hurry-up efforts from the 20th of April could have averted all the damage, but there is no doubt that vigorous action even at the beginning of May could have saved millions of dollars worth of property.

But flood control is really a long-term undertaking. If people insist on settling in a river's natural over-flow basin, then danger and periodic damage have to be reckoned with, and guarded against as well as possible. The problems presented are both physical and biological. Sometimes a narrow channel will not carry away the extra water quickly enough, and it backs up over the surrounding area above this "bottle neck." This calls for a widening operation if such is practicable. If it is not, then levees must be built higher and stronger, and steps must be taken above the flooding area to retard the flow of water and extend the period of more or less violent run-off.

The reduction of the volume of stream flow to the capacity of the river channel at its most hazardous point is related to a number of factors.

1. The increased absorption of moisture by the soil on which it falls. This is aided by maintaining on slopes a cover of trees or grass, hay or other close-growing crops.
2. The building of numerous small check dams wherever a natural basin offers, as well as larger dams; over-flow basins serve the same purpose.
3. Contour ploughing and strip cropping as well as frequent small dams not only serve to absorb and store water, they also reduce its velocity and hence its eroding and carrying capacity. The importance of reducing the amount of soil carried away by streams or rivers is hardly appreciated in Canada. Not only are vast amounts of valuable topsoil entirely wasted, but this soil contributes to the volume of the flood, and the damage done;

it also makes further flooding more likely. These points may be briefly elucidated:

- (a) Soil carried by rivers in flood often represents 20 per cent of the volume; hence it may be responsible for the foot or several feet that overflow the banks or levees.
- (b) The heavy covering of dirt left by a receding river is particularly difficult to clean up, even if the damage done is not total.
- (c) Soil carried by rivers is deposited on river bottoms, reducing the volume of water that can be accommodated and frequently building up the river bottom to a height that requires higher and higher levees, with the possibility of calamitous damage if the levee breaks.
- (d) This soil can render storage dams and basins useless in a very short time. There are hundreds of cases in Canada and thousands in the United States of expensive dams filled to capacity with silt.

Unfortunately the Red River problem has international complications since it rises in the United States and flows for about three-fourths of its length in that country. In British Columbia a similar need of co-operation with the United States exists. Incidentally, it will be interesting to see how effective the precautions taken following the British Columbia floods of 1948 will be, for in B.C. at the time of writing (May 16th) conditions conducive to flooding similar to those obtaining in 1948, seem likely to develop.

And There Is No Peace

The Canadian delegation to the Moscow Peace Congress has been active in various cities of Canada since its return. A "Ban the Bomb" petition and interviews with Messrs. Pearson and Coldwell in Ottawa backfired somewhat, but large public meetings in Toronto and Hamilton were more successful, and the movement is currently enjoying a good deal of publicity.

The stock reactionary answer is that the movement led by Dr. Endicott and Hewlett Johnson is a one hundred per cent Communist front, and that anyone who imagines it to be anything else is a sucker. Because it is the stock reactionary answer, many people of tolerance and good will feel that it is too facile to be the right one. Actually, it is the right one. But if Communists talked complete nonsense they would not be dangerous. We cannot say that it's all Communist propaganda and therefore a pack of lies; if it's all Communist propaganda, it's about forty per cent true. It is true that the world is heading straight for a war of unimaginable destruction. It is true that no organized group of people in Canada are preaching peace with the same earnestness as the Communists. It is true that Soviet Russia does not want a shooting war. And it is very probably true that the inherent contradictions in the present structure of American capitalism make, if not a war, at any rate some kind of war economy, necessary to its functioning at the present time. A lot of other things are true too; but that does not prevent these things from being equally true.

Hence the enormous propaganda value that Dr. Endicott, Dean Johnson, and Father Duffy have for the Communists. They suggest that their adherence to the party line is the result of a Christian longing for peace; they rouse nostalgic memories of the thirties and the mirage of a "Popular Front" of all lovers of freedom against brutal tyrants; and they exploit the very natural distrust that many people have for anti-Communist smear campaigns. They can create a mass rally in a big auditorium where the Communists in their

own name could not raise a dozen people beyond their own members. Hoodlums who break up their meetings add immeasurably to their prestige. And their influence can do nothing but expand and increase in the power vacuum created by the democratic apathy and sense of frustration about an approaching atom-bomb war. We shall have to find better arguments for peace than the facile demonstration that those who advocate the peace of a world-wide Communist dictatorship are Communists.

Behind the Pipelines

Once again the government at Ottawa is likely to deprive the people of Canada of one of our richest remaining resources, the natural gas from the old fields of Alberta. Behind a smoke screen of evasions the Liberal administration, with its overall majority of 124 M.P.s, is determined to give certain private interests a free hand in piping natural gas to the markets of Washington and Oregon, bypassing entirely the province of British Columbia. Opposition members are determined to fight the granting of any charter until it includes a guarantee that Canadian needs will be served before any overflow is permitted to the United States.

Small in numbers, the CCF group in the House of Commons is to be congratulated for its unremitting battle on this issue. Several of the Progressive Conservatives have also been quite outspoken. As a result, certain realities have at length emerged, so ugly as to force even a few British Columbia Liberals to kick over party traces. There is the fact that on the witness stand before the parliamentary committee the president-to-be of one of the companies applying for a charter made it quite clear that unless ordered to do so by the Board of Transport Commissioners, the company had no intention of taking its pipeline through British Columbia. Yet earlier in the month Mr. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce, had written assurances to the Vancouver City Council that he had information that the proposed company intended to go through British Columbia. There is the circumstance that the sponsor of the bill, a parliamentary assistant, was also a member of the committee, and he used his prestige and the government majority on the committee to force closure of its work before any witnesses except those applying for the charter could be examined. As a result, Parliament has not been presented with the facts of the case.

It would appear that the administration at Ottawa is determined to prostitute democratic government to the uses of private exploiters on both sides of the international boundary. The need for an opposition numerically able to get the facts to the public becomes imperative and urgent.

Thumbprint

The recent announcement that Ontario police have now been empowered, even ordered, to seize the car of any motorist charged with drunk driving should come as a nasty shock to every citizen. Surely this is an abominable infringement both of the rights of the citizen and of one of the oldest principles of English law. "The vehicle," the announcement concludes, "will be held until the case is disposed of."

Here is trial and conviction by the police if ever we saw it; here is a smashing blow at the old and honored principle that a citizen is innocent until proved guilty. The onus is now on the driver, however innocent, to prove that he is not guilty. Until he does so he must do without his car at the pleasure of those who, though nominally our servants, are rapidly becoming our upstart masters—the police.

Let us have this horrible piece of legislation revoked at once. Let the authorities, by all means, impound the car of

a drunken driver for as long as they think necessary—but only *after* it has been properly determined that he *is* a drunken driver, only after the accused man has been found guilty by due process of law. Let us not have to face even the possibility that hundreds of innocent motorists shall be deprived of their cars on the mere unsupported word of one or more disgruntled and ignorant motorcycle Cossacks.

BARGAINING AT EATONS—continued

communism, of John L. Lewis, of strikes. Old-timers at Eaton's, those who held their jobs through the depression and are now too old to change, remember how Eaton's fought the attempts of their dressmakers to organize in the '30s, and are skeptical that labor laws enacted since have enough teeth to protect them.

Once a foundation of membership was built, Local 1000 set out to meet this fear by encouraging open participation of union members in the campaign. Eaton employees stand side by side with volunteer distributors from other unions when *Unionize* is handed out at the doors. In a series of radio programs over CKEY this spring, more Eaton employees took their stand in urging the rest to organize. Using employees on home canvassing in the evenings has been found a useful technique. Culmination of this display of open union activity was the distribution this March of a leaflet bearing signatures and departments of one hundred union committee members, calling on Eaton employees to "finish the job."

Although snubbed by the press, the Eaton drive has been well publicized through the councils and local unions of CCL affiliates. No other union financial campaign, with the exception of major strikes such as the Ford and Stelco strikes of a few years back, has met with such widespread response. Donations to assist the drive have come from all over Canada. Despite the length of the drive, financial support has not been lacking. The size of the investment already involved will no doubt make the Department Store Organizing Committee determined to carry through to completion of the drive.

The organizing staff were chosen with an eye to the "approach" necessary for white-collar workers. Headed by Eileen Tallman, herself a former office employee and a veteran of many Steelworkers' organizing drives, the staff includes Lynn Williams, university graduate and former YMCA worker, Walter Ross who gained union experience at Research Enterprises during the war and left a job in the insurance field to come with the Eaton drive, and Ernest Arnold, active in the UAW at DeHavilland in war years. Publicity for the campaign has been a full-time job, assigned to Marjorie Gow, ex-civil servant, who had years of publicity experience with the Steelworkers' union.

Success of the drive is still not a foregone conclusion, although Local 1000 believes it can reach certification strength this year. The stakes are very high, and every employer in the retail field knows it. The large department store of the Robert Simpson company is just across the street from Eaton's in Toronto. Hudson's Bay, into which some union inroads have already been made, is concentrated in the more union-conscious west. If Eaton's in Toronto can be cracked, the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union will have the largest white-collar membership of any union in Canada. Local 1000 in Toronto would be bigger than the union. The whole pattern of retail wages, at present at the bottom of the salary ladder, could be changed. This in turn would influence the purchasing power picture in the Canadian economy, at a time when unemployment is a serious threat. Ford local in Windsor, now the largest Canadian local

The advantages would stretch far beyond the Eaton employees in Toronto. It is not hard to see why CCL labor is determined to bring the Eaton drive to a successful conclusion.

Tyrus Lord

Letter from London

Stella Harrison

► TWO OR THREE TIMES each month I walk up a suburban hill to see an aging and cantankerous invalid. It is never an entertaining visit and I do not care for walking, particularly uphill. Yet though the motive of the expedition is mainly duty, I do derive some profit from it, for it enables me to observe the passage of the seasons by signs invisible from my town apartment.

Today summer was wafted in on an easterly breeze after a spell of the kind of wintry weather that must have inspired the proverb: Ne'er cast a clout till May is out. The front gardens of the suburban hill are glowing under a clear sky. The limes wear their incredible new green, the candles of the horsechestnuts are alight, laburnum drips golden over rain-fed lawns, and purple irises stab upward toward the full-blossomed lilac, purple, and white. It is the suburb's time of vindication.

The countryside has the flowering blackthorn and the drift of primroses, crab-apple, dogrose and all the meadow flowers on till the woods blaze in autumn glory and winter spreads a white blanket embroidered with red berries. The village has its tiny cottage gardens of wallflowers and night-scented stock, the town has its massive tulip-beds and gay window-boxes of scarlet geraniums. But the lilac and laburnum are suburban shrubs. They grow in the sort of gardens people tend for themselves at weekends and in the evenings after the day's work in the city.

These are the gardens of neighbors, people of broadly similar tastes and habits who have all elected to live on the residential fringe of large towns. Each garden is individual and personal, no matter how stereotyped the house, and each garden has two or three flowering shrubs by the gate



TAKING IN THE NEIGHBOR'S WARNING

or in the corners nearest the road so that the road itself in May is a flowered ride between embankments of purple, yellow, and white. Each separate gardener stoops and stretches, weeds and prunes to suit his individual purpose, rarely spurred by a spirit of competition, more or less indifferent to the composite effect, which is at most incidental. Yet this living joy to the chance visitor from town, as different from the self-conscious primness of the garden city as the common law of England from the Constitution of the United States, is the result of one kind of co-operation, perhaps—who knows?—even the best kind.

Organized co-ordination of communally determined plans might give neater streets, nobler perspectives, almost certainly more blossom per pound of fertilizer spread and per man-hour of labor expended. Pooled effort plus technical expertness might reproduce on the periphery the stately charm of London squares, the dignified artistry of formal gardens. It is the obstinate self-expression of fallible little men, toiling often wastefully toward the good as each man sees it, that nurtures the short-lived eternal splendor of the suburban hill in May.

It is an illustration of the most typical of English virtues. If you try to label peoples by their distinctive qualities you immediately characterize the French as logical, the Americans as enterprising, the Germans as thorough (obedience being a doubtful starter in the mid-twentieth-century Virtues Stakes). Surely what distinguishes the English is their nonconformity; not the hyper-critical individualism of the French nor the materialistic individualism of the Americans but the blank refusal to take an imprint, to be molded to type, to accept dogma unquestioningly or support causes unconditionally.

Our non-conformity in recent centuries has given meaning to the word freedom, lifting it out of the continental revolutionary association of Liberty with Equality to be the highest purpose of political progress. The freedom of speech which we claim is after all not freedom to say we like our Government but to say we don't; the freedom of conscience is not freedom to worship in diverse churches but to refuse to worship and even to denounce religion. We believe that the individual must be free to follow the pack, or his own bent, according as the spirit moves him, just as the suburban householder can make of his own garden what he will, respecting no laws about gardening but only laws for the necessary protection of neighbors and passers-by. Freedom in the matter of taste—to us so natural—is wholly justified by the effective union of the suburban hill, achieved not in spite of but, illogically, because of its variety of individual gardens.

Our nonconformity is more than ever valuable in the world today, a world of blocs and power politics and smear tactics, a world where we are bludgeoned with propaganda, stunned with slogans, and betrayed with the superficial science of readers' digests. For—let us face it—it is not only behind the Iron Curtain that freedom is menaced by a new conformity, that a man's ability as mathematician or physicist is measured by the color of his tie.

We have long assumed that a suspect under arrest in a satellite State might be handed over to Soviet examiners for interrogation. It is a new departure that a prisoner convicted under British law should, while serving his sentence, be questioned by American investigators as is apparently proposed in the Fuchs case. And surely it was only a year ago that we took a German off a Polish ship in British waters at American behest, though to the everlasting credit of British justice the court freed him without long delay.* The fact that we may not like Eisler's or Fuchs's politics should make us all the more careful of our liberties. It is

always easier to make exceptions where one's own prejudices are aroused; but the walls of precedent, once breached, may let in the flood waters of arbitrary power to drown the just with the unjust.

The Americans possess written safeguards in their Constitution. The Bill of Rights with, at its core, the fundamental Fifth Amendment unequivocally extends protection to all citizens whose nonconformity infringes no properly established law. Perhaps it does not work out just like that in practice at all times for all Americans but at least they have it in writing and that should be a great consolation to the victims of smear campaigns. We English have to depend much more on our own vigilance. We are all sentries at the watchtowers of freedom. To let ourselves be lulled by the music of the waves, even the transatlantic music derived in part from our own folksongs, would be the gravest dereliction of duty.

London, England, May 9, 1950.

*Eisler was forcibly removed from the *Batory* in Cowes Roads on May 14, 1949, following a request under the Anglo-U.S. Extradition Treaty. On May 27, the London court concerned with extradition charges found that he was not extraditable for the crime of perjury. The presiding magistrate invoked the legal definition of perjury in making clear the request for extradition should not be complied with. On the same day, a State Department spokesman said that the U.S.A. had hoped that the magistrate would base his ruling on a loose definition of perjury rather than on the strict definition laid down in British Statutes.

AGE AND EXPENDABILITY—continued

we have ignored the underlying social and economic objectives, toward the attainment of which the pension is only a means.

Perhaps the most dangerous assumption lying behind most of the discussion of old-age pensions is that old-age is itself a sufficient justification for the payment of economic security benefits. This assumption is not true. The acceptance of this assumption will have economic and social consequences of grave implication for Canada.

It is a truism to say that Canada, although not so markedly an "aging people" as Great Britain or even the United States of America, is a people in which the proportion of older people to the remainder of the population is steadily rising. Between 1901 and 1949 the proportion of children and young adults shrank from 63 percent of the population to 54 per cent. The age group 30 to 44 rose slightly, from 18 to 20 per cent of the population; and the proportion aged 45 and over rose from 19 per cent in 1901 to 26 per cent in 1949. It is calculated that "Even with no further reduction in mortality rates, the number of persons in Canada aged 45 to 64 will increase from about 2½ million in 1949 to some 3½ million in 1971, and they will then make up an appreciably larger proportion of those in the most active years of working life (20 to 64) than the present 34 per cent. Over the same period, the Canadian population of 65 and over will increase from about a million to a million and a half . . ."¹

To assume, as we do seem to assume, that in modern industrial employment a worker is too old for new employment at 45 and should normally be retired from productive employment at 65 (or even 60) is, in the light of these figures, a very dubious and uneconomic attitude. The Minister of Health and Welfare demonstrated the folly of this assumption in his speech of March 10 in the House of Commons when he presented a table showing the cost of a universal old-age pension at various ages and amounts. He estimated, for example, that a universal pension at \$50 a month at

¹"Young and Old: The Changing Age Pattern." *The Monthly Review* of the Bank of Nova Scotia; New Series, No. 43 Toronto, February, 1950.

age 65 would cost in 1951: \$660,840,000
 in 1961: \$823,500,000
 in 1971: \$978,000,000

Even in an expanding economy, with a rising index of industrial production, that is a substantial burden of dependency to assume on a national budget which in 1950 was of the order of \$2¼ billion. Moreover that represents dependency of only one group in the community, and there are other groups, such as children, the sick, the disabled, and the unemployed, who have equally just claims to economic support at times when they are unable to earn.

It is not difficult, then, to demonstrate that the acceptance of a birthday date as a symptom of dependency will lead to a very heavy burden on the productive energies of those who are employed. It is equally easy to show, from available information, that the older citizen need not only not be dependent but that he also has great productive capacities which can enrich the community provided that he is given suitable opportunities within his capacities and related to his particular gifts and skills. We recognize that young workers have physical and vocational limitations as well as assets, but we have so far given little systematic study or recognition to the industrial assets of the older workers. The fact that they can be employed can be seen from recent reports from Great Britain that about 66 per cent of all insured women reaching retirement age (60) since July 5, 1948 (the beginning of operations under the British National Insurance and National Assistance schemes), have continued in regular employment. The studies of the New York Legislative Committee on the Needs of the Aged have amply demonstrated the work capacities of older workers.² The chairman of that Committee summarises the findings of these studies: "We have been clinging in many cases to outworn myths. We simply cannot afford to cast the know-how of our oldsters aside, waste this huge productive power, or permit our aging people to become public charges because of unscientific personnel policies. We must alter our concepts about the desirability of retirement and the worthiness of automatic ouster with or without pension of employees at 65. Compulsory and voluntary retirements are traps that lure oldsters to idleness where they corrode, become ill, break down mentally, or die before their time."

The logic of these facts is that any pension proposals which emerge from the Canadian Parliamentary Joint Committee will be economically and industrially unsound if they are based on the assumption that mere age is a valid indication of economic dependency. It would be ironic if a government headed by a vigorous able old man in his late 60's were to make any such proposals.

Senator Desmond, in the quotation just given, indicates another feature of dispensing with the older worker to which attention should be directed. Recent studies³ have suggested that to deprive an active worker of his job solely on the ground of age is medically unsound. Nothing is more likely to hasten the biological process of aging than unwanted idleness. In this way are created not only dependency, but mental and physical illness, which throw additional burdens on to the community. Hospitals and mental institutions throughout Canada are burdened with chronic patients whose real illness is our abuse of the aged just because they are old.

Other social consequences of treating the older citizen as incompetent and dependent lie within the family and the

community. It is obviously unreasonable, with the kind of housing which is now normal, with the kind of wage-structure which now prevails, and with the costs of living as they now are, to expect the family to sustain the economic burdens of caring for the older generation. Social services are needed to maintain older people as healthy and useful citizens. The study and practice of geriatrics as a positive science rather than the all-too-prevalent attitude of caring for the sick aged; the development of housing adapted to the needs of the aged; the provision of home-nursing services; the expansion of recreation facilities for the aged; these are some of the urgently needed health and welfare services. It might be more profitable to spend some money on these positive steps than use all the available resources on monetary compensation for age. It will be administratively much more difficult. It will mean training of suitable staff and the development of complex health and welfare programs. There can, however, be little excuse for sacrificing the well-being of people to administrative convenience. It is socially dangerous to allow lack of imaginative social-welfare policies to be obscured behind the fiscal and administrative technicalities of the various types of pension scheme.

Our economic and social objectives should be kept clearly before the Canadian people. Old age should be regarded as the normal part of the life span, with great productive capacities and great social values which need to be developed and used. A pension scheme is not an end in itself and has no virtue except as a means to these ends. In their interest and our own we must remind ourselves that, in our society at least, the aged are not expendable.

Quebec Labor and Catholic Teachers

W. E. Greening

► THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE of Quebec, the long-continued dispute between L'Alliance des Professeurs Catholiques de Montreal and the Montreal Catholic School Commission has caused much discussion during the past year and a half. Its significance has now extended far beyond the boundaries of the city of Montreal. Leo Guindon, the president of the Alliance, by his courageous defence of his organization in the face of repeated attacks by the Montreal School Commission and the Provincial Government, has become a leader among the labor groups of the province in their struggle against the reactionary and authoritarian labor policies of the Duplessis Union Nationale administration.

The very existence of the Alliance des Professeurs Catholiques is symptomatic of the far-reaching social changes which are taking place in French Canada. The lay Catholic school-teachers in Quebec had long been one of the most exploited and downtrodden teaching groups in the whole dominion. At the beginning of the 1940's, when the Alliance first came into being, the salaries of Catholic teachers in city and rural schools were pitifully low. (Even today, in some sections of the Quebec countryside, the average salaries for female teachers in the elementary schools run as low as five hundred dollars a year.) There was a complete lack of adequate pension systems and job security. Since Guindon began his work of organizing both the city and rural teachers into unions in 1941, there has been a very considerable improvement both in general working conditions and in salary rates. In the city of Montreal alone, the salary

²Especially the 1949 Report, *Never Too Old*; Albany: New York State Legislative Committee on the Needs of the Aged, 1950.

³For example, Otto Pollak: *Social Adjustment in Old Age*, New York; The Social Science Research Foundation, 1948. J. H. Sheldon: *The Social Medicine of Old Age*, London: Oxford University Press, 1948.

rates of Catholic teachers in some categories were almost doubled and brought much more into line with those in other provinces, and adequate pension and tenure systems were instituted. Through his dynamism, his enthusiasm, and his general ability, Guindon succeeded in building up a strong organization which now includes almost 90 per cent of the French-speaking lay teachers in the Catholic schools of Montreal. The fidelity and devotion of the members of the Alliance to Guindon when confronted by a barrage of hostile propaganda on the part of the Montreal School Commission is a proof both of his sterling qualities of leadership and of his strong personal magnetism.

The present bitter dispute between Guindon and the Commission had its origins in 1948. Although considerable progress had been made since 1941, the Alliance was still dissatisfied with prevailing salary rates and thought that further adjustments should be made. They made demands for the teaching year 1948-49 which would have brought the level of salaries for the highest category of male teachers in Montreal up to an average of \$3,500 a year, with corresponding boosts for lower categories. The Montreal School Commission put up the stock objection that it lacked the financial resources to pay these raises. It was supported in this claim by an Arbitration Board which was set up by the city to adjudicate the matter. The Commission then claimed that it made an offer to the Alliance to have a bill put through the 1949 session of the Quebec Legislature which would provide the necessary funds for salary raises. But according to the Alliance version of events, these funds would only apply to future years and not to the year 1948-49 which was under discussion. By the end of December, 1948, a deadlock was reached.

In January, 1949, almost immediately after the Christmas holidays, the Alliance decided upon strike action to gain its demands, and one of the first large-scale walk-outs of teachers in a Canadian city began. Classes in all the French Catholic schools were suspended for a period of over two weeks and hundreds of students had an unexpected holiday. One of the most remarkable things about the strike was the great degree of solidarity which it evoked from teaching and labor groups in Montreal and in other parts of the province. The teachers in the English-speaking Catholic schools of the city also walked out in sympathy with the Alliance. The Protestant teachers of the province, who have an effective organization of their own, were known to be favorable to Guindon and the Alliance although they made no public expressions of sympathy. The strike also got the backing of the Catholic teachers in cities of Quebec as far removed from Montreal as Chicoutimi and Sherbrooke, and all three labor federations of the province—the Canadian Congress of Labor, the Trades and Labor Congress, and the Catholic Confederation of Labor made similar gestures of approval. It is significant that the Montreal School Commission found it impossible to get teachers from the various Catholic orders in the city to fill the places of the members of the Alliance. These individuals, whose salaries are so low as to be almost laughable, apparently realized that the cause of the whole teaching profession in the province was at stake in the dispute, and accordingly refused to fall in with the Commission's plans.

The provincial government, whose control over the Catholic educational system of Montreal is close and all-embracing, lost no time in entering the fray. In one of his typical tirades Duplessis attacked the Alliance in strong terms for its action, claiming that the strike was an act of rebellion and contrary to Catholic social teaching. The Commission, supported by Duplessis and the provincial administration, petitioned the Provincial Labor Relations

Board to remove the certification of the Alliance as the collective bargaining agent for the teachers, thus depriving the organization of the legal basis for its existence. This action was taken against the Alliance by the Labor Relations Board about half way through the strike.

Meanwhile Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau of Montreal, a leader of Catholic liberal thought in Quebec, who had long been sympathetic with the teachers' cause, made moves to see if a settlement could be reached which would be satisfactory to both parties. Finally, toward the end of January, 1949, the teachers went back to their classrooms with the understanding that the Archbishop would try to gain for them the substance of their demands.

Whatever further moves the Archbishop may have made ended in failure. From then on, the center of the dispute shifted from the question of salaries to that of the very existence of the Alliance itself. Basing its stand on the decision of the Quebec Labor Relations Board, the Commission refused to recognize the Alliance as the bargaining agent for the French Catholic lay teachers of Montreal. The Alliance refused to accept the stand of the Commission and petitioned the Superior Court of the province of Quebec to have the decision of the Labor Relations Board set aside. During the spring and summer of 1949, the Commission tried to break the hold of Guindon over the Alliance by encouraging attempts to form a rival union, but this had no success since the great majority of the teachers in the city saw through the Commission's game.

Matters dragged on thus through the latter months of 1949. The Commission refused to recognize the Alliance as the bargaining agent for the teachers, and the Alliance made further appeals to the Superior Court in Quebec City to nullify the decision against it by the Labor Relations Board. The situation came to a head in January, 1950, when the Commission took drastic action against Guindon by ordering him to return to active teaching at the Saint Louis School in Montreal and threatening him with suspension if he refused to fall in with their demands. Guindon, however, stood firm. Backed by the Alliance, he said that he would not re-enter the class rooms because if he was forced to resume active teaching, he would lack the proper time to perform his duties as President of the Alliance. In a series of hard-hitting broadcasts over one of the Montreal radio stations, he claimed that the real aim of the Commission in taking this move against him was to weaken the Alliance and bring about its eventual disintegration. The Commission then published a full-page statement of its case against the Alliance and Guindon which appeared in practically all the English and French language daily newspapers in Montreal. In this statement Guindon was accused of a long list of misdemeanors. The Commission claimed that the Alliance had acted illegally and in bad faith in staging the strike in January, 1949, and that it had maintained a highly disrespectful and anti-Christian attitude towards Archbishop Charbonneau and the ecclesiastical members of the Commission. By an elaborate quotation of salary figures and rates, it tried to prove that the present salary levels of Montreal Catholic teachers were quite satisfactory in relationship to the present cost of living.

The Commission followed this action by suspending Guindon from his teaching position and thereby making him ineligible to continue in his post as President of the Alliance.

The Commission may be right in thinking that in getting rid of Guindon they can break the Alliance, but the Alliance is certainly not going to take this latest blow lying down. As the events of the last two years have shown, Guindon is a stubborn and tenacious fighter and nothing is less likely than a tame surrender on the part of the Alliance at this

stage in the dispute. Even if the Superior Court of Quebec upholds the decision of the Labor Relations Board in taking away the right of certification from the Alliance, Guindon and his followers are certain to continue the struggle. Another strike of the Montreal Catholic teachers which may be longer and bitterer than that of January, 1949, is in prospect. And this time the Alliance expects to have the financial as well as the moral support of the labor federations of the province.

This affair is of importance in relation to the recent widely discussed retirement of Archbishop Charbonneau. It is fairly clear that the case of the Montreal school-teachers was one of the many subjects of dispute between Archbishop Charbonneau and the Duplessis administration during the past two years and that the inflexible attitude of the latter in this question was one of the causes of his sudden withdrawal from his important post. It will be interesting to see what attitude his successor, Monseigneur Paul Emile Leger, the new Archbishop of Montreal, takes on this matter. If he continues the policy of Charbonneau and adopts a stand against the provincial government and the School Commission in support of Guindon, the chances for the ultimate success of the Alliance in its struggle for survival may be fairly bright. In any event, the future career of Leo Guindon will bear watching. He is one of the most courageous and dynamic labor leaders that Quebec has yet produced.

Volume Thirty: A Retrospect

(PART III)

Carlton McNaught

► DURING THE SIX YEARS immediately before and during the Great Depression, *The Canadian Forum* owed its existence to the public spirit of Hugh Dent, head of the English publishing firm of J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., who, in the course of a business visit to Canada, perceived the service the magazine was rendering to Canadian cultural life and generously offered to assume financial responsibility for it without interfering in its editorial direction. Henry Button, the firm's Canadian manager, was added to the committee, of which he proved a congenial and helpful member, and the magazine was printed and its deficits met by the Dent firm.

To some it may seem ironical that when so thoroughly Canadian an undertaking as *The Canadian Forum* was facing extinction, it was not a Canadian but an Englishman who came to the rescue. In any event, the magazine was enabled by Mr. Dent's magnanimity to continue on its course without deviating from its established policies. For the first time it was possible to appoint a full-time general editor; and this post was capably filled for the six years by J. Francis White.

The wonder is that *The Canadian Forum* should have been able to exist for so long, and at such a level of excellence, with so little aid from commercial advertising. Almost its only revenue of this kind was from book publishers and with the depression, of course, even this uncertain source was due to dwindle. Another decade was to pass, and further crises were to arise, before the hard facts of Canadian life would be frankly faced: namely, that in the case of a magazine of independent thought like *The Canadian Forum* any dependable financial support needed beyond revenue from circulation must come from its readers,

and that in such circumstances editorial direction and contents must be largely on a voluntary basis. Facing of these facts has made *The Canadian Forum* a co-operative undertaking of its readers and producers, in which the readers furnish the money and the producers the time and effort.

As the financial strain of the depression continued, it was not to be expected that even so magnanimous a supporter as the Dent firm could continue to assume this extra burden. The new group which took over consisted, as one writer put it, of "Liberal intellectuals who stood somewhat uncertainly to the left of Mr. Mackenzie King but very certainly to the right of all schools of socialism." They hoped to increase both circulation and advertising by appealing to what they hoped would be a wider audience. A new company, Canadian Forum Limited, was chartered, and the first issue appeared in May, 1934, with Steven Cartwright as editor and an editorial committee consisting of E. H. Blake, Toronto; Norman McL. Rogers, Kingston; R. A. MacKay, Halifax; G. V. Ferguson, Winnipeg. In subsequent months, N. A. MacKenzie, Toronto, H. Goldenberg, Montreal, and W. B. Herbert, Winnipeg, joined, and G. V. Ferguson retired from the committee. Two committee members, E. H. Blake and N. A. MacKenzie, had been prominent in the old group, and many former contributors continued to supply articles, book reviews, fiction, and poems. Generally speaking, the magazine maintained its long-established reputation for free discussion and a thoughtful treatment of Canadian and world affairs, as well as for literary merit.

But before a year had elapsed, the deficit had grown so great that the new management began to lose heart. Graham Spry, then secretary of the CCF in Ontario, undertook to assume responsibility, and control of Canadian Forum Limited was transferred to him. With himself as editor, Morden Lazarus and Margaret Sedgewick as assistants, and J. Smith-Ross as managing editor, Mr. Spry had the support, as contributing editors, of the following: F. H. Underhill, G. M. A. Grube, E. A. Havelock, E. R. Reid, H. M. S. Carver, F. R. Scott, J. King Gordon, E. A. Forsey, L. C. Marsh, Leo Kennedy, Donald Buchanan, and Pegi Nicol, several of whom, it will be noted, had been editors or contributors during previous regimes. Though Mr. Spry and a number of his associates were actively allied with the CCF, it was made clear in the first issue under his direction—which appeared in July, 1935—that the magazine would be operated, not as a party organ, but to serve, as heretofore, "the principle of free controversy" and "the maintenance of high cultural standards in Canada."

In November, 1935, Eleanor Godfrey replaced J. Smith-Ross as managing editor; the masthead listed, under Board of Editors, Frank H. Underhill, Politics; H. J. Davis, Fiction and Poetry; G. M. A. Grube, Book Reviews; Pegi Nicol, Art; with, as contributing editors, E. A. Havelock, H. M. S. Carver, J. King Gordon, Leo Kennedy, F. R. Scott, E. A. Forsey, E. R. Reid, L. C. Marsh, Donald Buchanan. In May, 1936, R. W. Queen-Hughes was added to, and Leo Kennedy and Donald Buchanan retired from, the list of contributing editors; and E. A. Havelock joined the Board of Editors.

In the summer of 1936, Mr. Spry, who had resigned his position in the CCF with the intention of going to England, transferred his control of *The Canadian Forum* to the League for Social Reconstruction, whose members raised among themselves enough money to free the magazine of its debts and provide a small amount of working capital. Stock in the company was assigned by the old directors to individual members of the LSR. (It is perhaps needless to say that this stock has never paid any dividends, since there has never been any surplus out of which to pay them!). These share-

holders appointed directors, who appointed the editors (to serve without pay). For the ensuing two years, the magazine had the full time services as business manager, on a voluntary basis, of Mark Farrell, who moved from Montreal to Toronto and occupied a modest downtown office from which production routine and a promotion campaign were carried on, with the assistance of L. A. Morris, as circulation manager.

Editors and contributing editors remained for a while much the same as under the previous regime, with, as time went on, the retirement of some and the addition of others. L. A. MacKay and Donald Buchanan rejoined the board; in September, Morden Lazarus and Margaret Sedgewick retired; and in July, 1937, Mr. Spry also withdrew. In May, 1937, Earle Birney, who had joined the board the previous December, was given the title literary editor, thus becoming a link in the notable line of editors who have been responsible over the years for *The Canadian Forum's* excellence in fiction, poetry and literary criticism, the others being Barker Fairley, E. K. Brown, H. J. Davis, L. A. MacKay, and the present managing editor, Northrop Frye. From 1936 to 1939 the managing editorship (which at that time involved the onerous duty of planning each issue, organizing material, and looking after make-up) was held at intervals by Eleanor Godfrey, Mark Farrell, and G. M. A. Grube. In 1938, Helen Kemp Frye joined the board as art editor, and continued the responsibility for acquainting *Canadian Forum* readers with the excellence of Canadian artists' work through black and white reproductions and critical articles—an editorial function previously exercised successively by J. E. H. and Thoreau Macdonald, Lawren Harris, Arthur Lismer, Jeanne Bietry Salinger, Pegi Nicol, Donald Buchanan, Campbell McInnis, and others. Some of the best work of top-rank Canadian poets—E. J. Pratt, A. J. M. Smith, Leo Kennedy, Audrey Alexandra Brown, F. R. Scott, L. A. MacKay, Earle Birney, A. M. Klein, Alan Creighton, Dorothy Livesay, P. K. Page, and others—continued to receive first publication in *The Canadian Forum*.

Under LSR sponsorship, *The Canadian Forum*, though sympathetic editorially to the principles of democratic socialism, fully maintained the tradition of open-mindedness in politics, literature, and art and of informed and lively comment and criticism, which has won it an established following among intelligent readers both inside and outside Canada over a period of almost thirty years.

In August, 1938, L. A. Morris was made business manager, a position which he has held continuously ever since with a devotion and resourcefulness beyond praise. His tireless enthusiasm has, over the years, been responsible for enlisting the aid of innumerable voluntary workers who have given their time unselfishly to clerical work, mailing, and various production chores, and to whom a warm tribute is due, though, like the Unknown Soldier, they must here, for lack of space, remain nameless. A tribute is also due to Stewart Cowan, an experienced printer and publisher, who over a period of fifteen years has given invaluable counsel and assistance and hundreds of dollars worth of time to production work on the magazine.

The most strenuous efforts to expand circulation and advertising to a point which would eliminate the annual deficits eventually made it clear that some other method must be sought. The result was the initiation, in 1938, of a permanent voluntary sustaining fund. It is this fund, to which several hundred of its readers and friends now contribute each year, that bridges the gap between ordinary revenue and production costs, and alone makes it possible for *The Canadian Forum* to pay its way. A Canadian Forum Book Service, established in 1944, has proven helpful to

readers, under the management of Mrs. Kay Morris, and for several years has yielded a small surplus over operating costs to add to the magazine's income.

With the outbreak of war, *The Canadian Forum* seemed on the brink of another major crisis. It was uncertain what conditions the war might impose on freedom of speech, on paper supplies, and on the employment of manpower. Some of the magazine's editors had become engaged in activities, political or professional, which absorbed all their time. Others, as it turned out, were either drawn into the armed services or into wartime administrative work. Of the loyal band who had given so unstintingly of their time and brains to *The Canadian Forum* for many years, only a few were still in a position to work for it.

It was at this juncture that readers and friends of *The Canadian Forum* had reason to be especially grateful for the devotion of Eleanor Godfrey, a versatile member of the editorial board since 1936, and intermittently managing editor, who undertook, along with L. A. Morris, the business manager, and Alan Creighton, who became editorial assistant in 1941, to keep the flag of *The Canadian Forum* flying as long as war conditions would permit. As it happened, with the aid of the sustaining fund and an expanded circulation due partly to subscriptions for armed service centres, as well as some wartime advertising in which all publications shared, the financial problem was somewhat lightened. There were paper restrictions which involved a progressive decline in the quality of paper used, but no restrictions on freedom of speech, except what "security" considerations dictated. With the continued support of those who still had some time to write for it, *The Canadian Forum* remained as interesting and lively in wartime as it had always been, and kept its growing body of readers alive to the issues raised by the war and the looming problems of "peace."

On the outbreak of war, the League for Social Reconstruction, like *The Canadian Forum* itself, was deprived of many members who were being drawn into active political, professional or war duties, and decided to disband. The shareholders of Canadian Forum Limited, still consisting of former members of the LSR, continued to appoint a board of directors, who are responsible for the conduct of the magazine through editors appointed by them. But in reality, as already stated, the magazine is now owned by, dependent for its existence upon, and responsible to its readers alone.

At the close of the war, many of its old editors and contributors were unable to resume active connection with the magazine. A great loss was suffered when Eleanor Godfrey, in 1947, found it necessary to relinquish the post of managing editor. This was generously assumed for a year by G. M. A. Grube, until it was taken over in April, 1948, by Northrop Frye, and new blood added to the editorial board.

One commentator (himself a former contributor) has remarked with seemingly ironic intent, that it is fortunate that an income derived from private enterprise enables so many Canadians to devote their time to writing without pay for a magazine like *The Canadian Forum*. Many of its writers, of course, have never subsisted on the avails of private enterprise, but on salaries from governments or state-supported institutions. But in any event, *Canadian Forum* readers and supporters have reason to be glad that there are so many Canadian writers of the highest rank, whatever their source of income, who have been willing to give their spare time to such an endeavor. Let us reserve our irony for the circumstance that, lacking such a reader-and-writer-supported magazine, intelligent Canadians would certainly be denied, by the editorial judgments of our commercial press, the kind of pleasure and profit they now derive from the pages of *The Canadian Forum*.

Robertson Davies

Hilda Kirkwood

► EVERYONE WHO READS Canadian periodicals of any type must by now know something of Mr. Robertson Davies, if it be only a photographer's interpretation of his appearance. His picture has been published so often during the past three years that the plates have worn thin.

He is a man with as many "profiles" as there are angles from which one may regard him. His better known aspects are those of "Mr. Robertson Davies, youthful, bearded editor and playwright" as journalistic jargon invariably dubs him, and "Samuel Marchbanks," a rather rebellious suburban dweller who is responsible for two witty volumes of comment on the daily scene, which originally appeared as weekly columns in the *Peterborough Examiner* (editor, Mr. Davies) and other Canadian dailies. These books, *The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks* and *The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks*, enjoyed by parliamentarians, professors and pipe-fitters all over Canada, are unique for certain qualities of style and robust humor, and for their sales records. They express, among other things, Samuel's jovial disapproval of dullards, stuffed shirts and dirty doggies.

Mr. Davies, the man on the street in a small Canadian city (which is fast becoming a sort of Davies-ville in a cultural way) is a rather portly figure with a light step and a literary angle to his hat. He has been known to sport a green jacket and the sort of haircut which would never flutter an eyelid elsewhere, but in his adopted bastion of Respectability the neighbors shake their heads with (respectful) resignation. "He's a writin' fellow, you know, different." Nevertheless, this would be construed as Letting Down the Middle Classes if it weren't that Mr. Davies keeps his greensward neatly mowed in the approved fashion of his particular suburb. Of Samuel Marchbanks it has been said that he sometimes showers his lawnmower with kicks and round Elizabethan oaths. He, however, is a sort of displaced person from a less suppressed age.

Since Mr. Davies himself is fast becoming a national legend, and has been one for some time in his own balliwick, many mildly monstrous stories have been woven around him. In all legends the strands of truth are hopelessly interwoven with a woof of whoppers, as:

"Mr. Davies (a big man) eats enormously. He is particularly fond of Curve Lake Frogs' Legs sautéed, and drinks quantities of Moselle '23."

"Mr. Davies is on a diet, for peripalpebral ecchymosis, of lettuce leaves, leeks and distilled water. He took the pledge in '42."

May we quote the ultimate authority on these matters?

"I am rarely anywhere that I am not out-eaten two to one by little skinny men" and "I could not possibly hold as much drink as most of the Methodist deacons and Presbyterian elders whom I meet socially."

But enough of the purely culinary.

• • •

Eight years ago when Robertson Davies, still under thirty, became editor of the *Peterborough Examiner*, he had already a considerable record of achievement in letters and the theatre. He had been educated in Ontario and at Oxford, and had published *Shakespeare For Young Players* and *Shakespeare's Boy Actors* (1938). He had served an apprenticeship with the Old Vic in London, as an actor and writer, and had been literary editor of *Saturday Night* for

two years. Since 1947 he has published the two Marchbanks volumes (1947 and 1949), *Fortune, My Foe*, a three-act play (1949) and *Eros at Breakfast and Other Plays* (also 1949). Although *Northern Review* apparently believes that all Canadian playwrights live in Toronto and write for radio, *Fortune, My Foe* was awarded the trophy for the best Canadian play in the 1949 Drama Festival. It has been successfully performed by two professional companies and adapted for radio by the CBC. There are five one-act plays in the *Eros at Breakfast* collection and the title play was the first Canadian drama entry in the Edinburgh Festival last summer. It received favorable notice. Of the other plays in this volume, one is *Overland*, an hilarious comedy with a strong current of bitter satire on the spiritual impoverishment of rural life in Canada. This, too, has been adapted for radio. Another is *At the Gates of the Righteous*, a fine play, not so popular with the critics, which exhibits Mr. Davies' distrust of the revolutionary type in society. (Editorially he is inclined to be a very liberal Liberal at times.) His latest play, *King Phoenix*, not yet published, had its first performance in Toronto on March 10.

Surely this is something of a record in Canadian letters, and in three years!

There is not space here in which to enlarge on the benefits which the city of Peterborough has received through this truly outstanding citizen. He has brought to an essentially commerce-minded community constant reminders of the more lasting values. He has given the paper a distinction lacked by most larger dailies, with wise and witty editorials on local and national issues which combine style with common sense, regularly publishes articles on the arts, and writes weekly book reviews which (oh rarity in Canada!) are not commercially slanted and are usually excellent criticism. This is to say nothing of his successful organization of the local theatre movement which he has taken into the wider arena of festival competition, nor of his tangible encouragement of promising work by individual writers, sketchers and photographers; his salutary influence on the local library, radio station, etc. Robertson Davies is a creative force, not only in his own community, but in the growing Canadian community of letters, of the theatre and in the newspaper world.

He has no intention of being a "do-gooder," or an "up-lifter," however, but prefers to make suggestions about the life of the city, through his paper, simply as suggestions. "I am in no sense in competition with the city's larger industries, and am perfectly happy to do what the Mayor tells me," he protests.

Needless to say, much is required of the wife of such a man. It is no accident that Mrs. Davies (formerly Brenda Newbold, also of the Old Vic) is an attractive and capable person with a flair for the dramatic in dress as in the theatre. Her ingenuity and tireless capacity for the many roles required of her seem to be as unlimited as her husband's.

"Pop," a wonderful salty character in *Overland*, says: "There's always a gol-danged necessity to get in the way whenever you want somethin' purty. . . . Somebody's got to take the bull by the horns an' ignore the necessities if we're ever goin' to have any o' the things that make life worth livin'." Thus Mr. Davies, on the decadent puritanism which has kept Canada a wasteland of indifference to the arts, and to the art of living, a condition his work is certainly helping to correct.

Meantime, Samuel Marchbanks, who has been puttering around his garden, a genial host, a pleasant guest and paterfamilias of three spirited daughters, does not take this state of affairs so seriously. Says Samuel in his *Diary*:

"Julian Symons writes 'The transition from the bourgeois art of the last three hundred years to any possible Socialist art of the future will not be made without . . . sacrifices.' Ha, Ha, Symons old boy! You should come to Canada, where the great mass of the public hasn't even found out about the bourgeois art of the last three hundred years, let alone this new Socialist art of which you speak in such trenchant terms. Get wise to yourself, Julian, you old red carnation, you!"

In Mr. Davies' office, which is refreshingly free from silk screen prints and chrome furniture, there are two plaster casts of bearded heads in high relief, purporting to be the likenesses of two ancient men of letters. These two peer over his shoulder at the unwary visitor who is then at a triple disadvantage, particularly if he be beardless. A member of the staff, whose duty it is to visit this office at night, complains that the eyes of these "statues" follow him around. He need not worry about them. There are far more perspicacious eyes regarding him in the daytime.

Bulldozer

The seasick and distracted tree,
Vomiting like madness on disrupted earth
Bellies its branches in one last
Voluptuous sway—and stumbles, smashed.

So in the pit of me some illness rules
Unbalancing my branches: heaving earth,
The vast machine of fear knuckling my roots.
I am tipsy with the reeling times,
The tractor twist of war.

Dorothy Livesay.

Adam's Choice

We live by prophecy; if anything
Distinguish us as men
(Not beast in field
Nor child in pen)
It is the prophetic dream.

Without your voice
O Baptist, O Mother Shipton
(Freud 'today, and yesterday Karl Marx)
We should be bent to earth
Aimless as children
In the innocent garden
Secret and hidden.

It was not an apple Eve swallowed
But the Word:
The voice calling forth tomorrow
Became her voice,
And the fear of dying
Without prophesying
Was Adam's choice.

Dorothy Livesay.

Quatrain

I wonder why that Mr. Luce
Don't name his papers by their use,
And give them titles on the level,
To wit: The World, The Flesh, The Devil.

G.B.J.

O CANADA

"Production of our agricultural products is more than three quarters of our troubles, not marketing," stated Premier J. Walter Jones as he commented upon a brief submitted by the Federation of Agriculture.

"I can not see how so many farmers can get away to attend meetings," stated the Premier . . . as he glanced around at an approximate dozen Federation farmers present. "If you were good farmers you would not be here." (The Guardian of the Gulf, Charlottetown, P.E.I.)

Ontario's gift to Newfoundland was a chair for the Speaker of the Newfoundland Legislature. Skilled Ontario craftsmen made it last year and it was presented to Premier Joseph Smallwood . . . by Premier Frost in the Speaker's chambers, Parliament Buildings, yesterday. The Ontario Premier said the chair had been used intentionally in the Ontario Legislature during the last session so that it would carry with it the spirit and the traditions of Ontario. (Globe and Mail)

Makes Youngsters Healthier But Cost Held Not Justified
(Headline, Globe and Mail)

Born again teachers wanted for interdenominational Sunday school.
(Classified advertisement in The Toronto Telegram)

Eight-month terms as troopers in the RCMP have been recommended for British Army subalterns. . . . Lt. Col. Brian Smith Jerome of the War Office says such assignments . . . would compensate for a lack of adventure in British Army services. Drabness of army life, he maintains, is affecting recruiting and the sort of man who used to be attracted by opportunities to go pig-sticking, hunting, polo playing and big game shooting now is seeking other career possibilities. (Globe and Mail)

Hon. Ray Petten: I should like to ask the leader of the opposition (Hon. Mr. Haig) if his reference yesterday to Newfoundland is correctly reported in Hansard. . . . I find on page 16 . . . Within the last month a very distinguished member of the government, the Secretary of State, who comes from Newfoundland, visited my city. . . . Later a certain gentleman said to me, 'Do you know, Senator Haig, these people from Newfoundland are very nearly civilized.'"

Hon. Mr. Baird: Is there any way whereby this passage can be deleted from Hansard?

Hon. Mr. Haig: The report cannot be deleted, but it can be corrected. The word "nearly" should be made to read "highly."
(Official Report of Debates, February 23, 1950)

Senator T. A. Crerar (L, Manitoba) . . . said he had heard comment that Indians did not want to become citizens because they would lose government aid. . . . Other Indians, employed during the war at the Pas, Man., drew their pay every two weeks and went out on a binge. Some of them spent their money driving around in a taxi all day. . . . The whole Indian problem might be solved, he said, if the Indians were compelled to accept citizenship, but that would be a short-sighted policy. It would not solve the fact that Indians still are Indians. (Globe and Mail)

Ford Frick, president of the National league . . . referring to baseball as "a God-given game," said last night's gathering, in honoring the diamond sport, "is paying tribute to one of the most important factors in the development of democracy that this country will ever know. 'It's bigger than the major leagues and organized baseball,'" he said. "It's the same thing that gives us faith in the family, the nation and God." (Globe and Mail)

This month's prize of a six months' subscription goes to Douglas MacFarlane, Bedeque, P.E.I. All contributions should contain original clipping, date and name of publication.

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THE CANADIAN FORUM

14 Huntley Street

Toronto 5, Canada

BACK OF THE BUILDING—by A. W. DAVEY



Until The Love Letters Are Published

(SHORT STORY)

Emilo Glen

► THE LOVE LETTERS of the great French composer, Barrault, and his Scottish sweetheart, Gwyneth, had nothing to do with my rattling El ride up to the Bronx in search of MacIver. Fact is, I couldn't rework the Barrault chapter of my book on *Folk Origins in Modern Music* until I traced a certain theme in his Hebridean Symphony, a folk-tune that had escaped the memory of the elderly composer himself.

A singer friend had told me about MacIver. "Met him through the Oratorio Society," he said, "a retired druggist with a passion for research, particularly old songs. Facts have a way of curling up at his feet."

As I turned down Claflin avenue, March gusts flinging the dried-up filth of streets in my face, I was certain nothing so elusive as a Hebridean folk-tune could possibly come out of that steep block of houses, painted a greasy gray right down to their gardenless gates.

Getting past a barricade of sisters who looked after their widowed brother, I groped down the ladder-like steps to MacIver's cellar hideout.

"Don't mind them," said the old man. "They can't shinny well enough to take over my cave." His elbow set the naked bulb above his desk swinging to shadow flame.

The furnace crouched so closely to his neatly crammed roll-top that its lion could almost nuzzle his master at his research.

"Pull up a seat," boomed out MacIver in pride at his young man's voice. As I hunched my six feet to clear the furnace pipes his brisk gesture offered me a choice of a broken-down rocker or a splinterous packing case. He parked his own spare bones on a squealing piano stool that doubled for the desk and harmonium just beyond it.

As if I had arrived solely to speculate on the Gwyneth-Barrault letters, MacIver started right in with, "Shouldn't hold such a thought, but I'm determined to outlive Barrault so I'll be around when the love letters are published. What reading they'll make! What reading! A stormy love all right, stormy as Gwyneth's Eriskay..."

"As Barrault's symphony," I wedged in, trying to bring him back to my search.

Rolling a cigarette between his fingers, he offered me the makings. "Now to track down the folk-tune," he said. "Few seek me out. No one takes time for research anymore, no real scholars left. Not that I have much to offer. Guess I'm just a rag-picker among old songs."

He pushed up the sleeves of his gray turtle-neck, and winged a flashlight into the depths of his thought cave. Old oak filing cases were stacked methodically next crowded grocery cartons, anything from Dole's pineapple juice to Kellogg's Corn Flakes serving the scholar, their contents consumed long ago to make room for the meat and drink of his research. He showed me his homemade notebooks tied with string or shoelaces, and crowded with songs he had transcribed or cut out and pasted up for compact filing.

"If you ask me," said the old man, "I think there might be enough in those letters to get Barrault into serious trouble. Maybe that's why he doesn't want them released until after his death. I don't believe she lost her footing on that cliff, not an islander. Why, even youngsters make a game of balancing on cliffs over the sea, first one foot, then the other, arms extended like wings. Survival on that rough

little isle demands it. Nobody thought of investigating the fall that caused her death, but with his murderous jealousy, who knows?"

MacIver's flashlight circled the names of Barrault and Gwyneth, her brief life 1882—1918, Barrault's 1870—, the closing date still to be written. "Barrault's only seventy-nine," said MacIver, "and I'm eighty-three, but my heart's got to hold out. Mark me, I'm sharpening my French against that day." His eyes were like wild sea-birds among rocky overhangs, eyes that had caught the light like Barrault's and Gwyneth's. "So much those letters will clear up. What I want to know is, why, after all those tortured years trying to bring himself to divorce that wife of his, why, after he got free of her, did they never marry?"

The old man reached down a file of Eriskay folksongs, most of them songs Gwyneth had sung around the world, songs I had heard many times over—waulking songs, churning songs, rowing songs, The Handsome Lad Frae Skye, Mermaid's Croon—none the theme I sought.

Scraping the piano stool over to the harmonium, I wheezed out the theme from the Hebridean symphony, desperately pumping the pedals to keep life in the instrument. "Barrault, himself can't place it," I said, "except that it's a fragment he might have heard Gwyneth hum."

But the old man was lost in a map of the Hebrides taped above his desk, the isle of Eriskay deepening under his gaze—a storm cloud of an isle, wind-swept, rain-beaten, fishermen singing as they mended their nets beside brown-winged fishing boats, maids singing at their chores, fenceless isle, isle of huts thatched with bent grass and bracken. He was setting out from the Lochboisdale pier, climbing the slippery rocks with Gwyneth. "In this study, it's easy to tunnel through to Eriskay," said the old man. "Have to confess I'd left you far behind. Think of all those wasted years when they could have been living together. I want to read about those years, understand them. Maybe some guilt complex on his part although his wife acted shamefully enough with her coarse tantrums, her fake suicide attempts. Life with her a hell, trying to compose in their cramped rooms while she jawed with her loud-mouthed in-laws or belched variety-hall tripe that tore into his web of tone. Sometimes I think Gwyneth was the one who wasted those years—afraid to live with genius, running from the storm."

All I could do to bring him back was to wheeze out the theme again. He dug his knuckles deeper into the hollow beneath his cheekbone. "Barra," he said. "It could be a tune from Barra. Or Benbecula, but much of that material is still unfiled. How about giving me until next week, that is, if you want to try me again?"

"You can't shake me now," I said.

Chortling from the depths of delight, he climbed up from his cave with all the agility of a chamois.

Before the week was out, MacIver called me over to his grove of a cellar to search through his new cuttings and pastings, but the tunes came wrapped in talk of Gwyneth and Barrault. Leaning across his desk, he kept questioning until he knew the very graining of Barrault's writing-table, its excruciating neatness, the blotter without an inkstain, the flesh-tinted pebble from Eriskay. When I told how Barrault's house in Brittany was set among granite outcroppings curiously like the wild cliffs of Eriskay, he tugged at a moustache reminiscent of his and Barrault's youth.

"Got to stay alive for those letters," he said. "You know, I think they had a little girl, but his letters will tell. His music almost does, those misting lullabies, the tone poem *To Grey Eyes Going on Seven*. Maybe he doubted the child was his, maybe that's what they quarrelled about, that last day on the cliff."

MacIver's next lead was the Ceilidhs, those get-together sings of the isles. What had Barrault heard at them, what tune that had become a theme of the Hebridean symphony?

The Ceilidh files were good for many sings, his baritone voice in full glory, his short-cuts to Gwyneth as frequent as ever. "She had the simple heart," he said one evening as he got up to bank the fire. "I heard her sing, you know, when I was a very young man—her face strong-textured, her lightish hair close-cropped in a simplicity unknown in those days. She was like a gull, strong in repose, the soul in flight. No accompaniment, no stage-setting as she stood up there—the only color, her voice."

He slapped a tightly rolled song sheet against his desk. "Believe me, I know how I'd write to her. I'd write, 'Gwyneth—Gwyneth, I sit here at my desk trying to think, compose, but every note climbs to our rock, every phrase is the curve of your lips, the rhythm, your strong, free stride, the beat, my wild pulse, a pulse I feel as I hold the little pebble, hold fast as to each moment with you. Your hair is moist and salty with the sea. I am in your arms.'"

The old man opened the furnace door to a low burning fire that faintly lit the granite angles of his face. "Look here," he boomed, "we're forgetting she lived in America for a time, could have come upon folk-tunes of the Southern mountains, those brought over from Scotland, perhaps altered almost beyond recognition."

This lead opened up so many packing cases that I began to think the walls of his cave had a rubbery give to them. Just as I began to think he was trumpeting me on so he could prolong his talks of Gwyneth, he tore a leaf from his notebook, and sat down at the harmonium, his feet all but dancing a jig on the foot pedals as he picked out the notes that his voice caught up to the makings of the Hebridean theme—our find—ours alone. We stamped out the beat in a reel of triumph that avalanched the coal in its bin.

How could I repay this obscure man whose years of research had gone into a line or two of somebody else's book? How could I do him honor? Appreciation in the foreword, of course. More than that, a dedication. The coming out of any book causes a certain flurry I tried to share with him, but he stood off in a meditative corner at cocktail parties, dozed at dinners, any request to speak on his research putting him in a panic: "No time," he said, "no time," passing up concert tickets for the treasures of his cave. Nor was he a celebrity seeker, keen to meet the famous musicians I wanted him to know. Even Barrault would have frightened him in person, only in his letters would he have felt happy and at home.

To live until the love letters were published, that was his want, a gift not within my power. Absorbed in a new work dealing exclusively with Barrault's music, a work that took me to Brittany, I lost touch with the old man. When my mail caught up with me, there were several letters from him. A stroke had kept him in bed, the left leg useless, but his hands busy and his brain free. "Guess I'll never get to read those letters, after all," he wrote.

When I went to see Barrault, he wanted to know how I had tracked down the folk-tune he had webbed into his Hebridean symphony. He bent forward, tugging at the snowy moustache that was like MacIver's granite gray one, even asked about the old man's desk as he had asked about Barrault's.

"A map of the Hebrides is taped above it," I said, "and he stares into it, seeing Eriskay. For years, he's been Gwyneth's shadow lover, living your life with her. He has written your letters to her, received her answers to you. The wish of his life is to read those letters."

Barrault's skeletal fingers tightened about the Eriskay pebble on his desk. He knocked over the chair getting to his feet, left the room with the painful attempt at speed of stiffened joints. I waited, but he didn't come back to go over the chapter we were working on.

For several days, his housekeeper refused to admit me, saying he was in too dark a mood to see anyone. A week later, he sent a note asking me to come to him. When I was shown into his study, he was at the desk in the early morning light, turning a sealed packet over and over in his hands.

"The letters," he said. "I trust you to take them to him, only see that they're quickly returned. Gwyneth would want him to read them. She had the simple heart."

As soon as we finished working on the chapters, I took a plane back to the old man. With the sealed packet locked in my briefcase I climbed the hill to his house, slush roughed to ice under foot, sleet driving against my face.

One of the sisters inched open the door to me. I wanted to turn down into the snug warmth of his cellar hideout, set out with him on some new search, but I was ushered into the small parlor to be briefed on the seriousness of his illness. I must only stay a moment, talk very little, excite him not at all.

"He had a very bad night," said another sister, leading me up the stairs to his monastic cell of a room in the back of the house. I started at first glimpse of him. Lids closed, mouth shrunken back to cheek cavities, he looked like a death's-head, but the instant he opened his eyes to me, life burned in those granite caves.

"Another theme to trace?" he asked. "You're welcome to my files. Wish I could get down to them with you."

Fitting the key into the briefcase lock, I took out the packet, and placed it in the old man's hand. "The letters," I said. "You're the first to break the seal."

My hand was shaking almost as much as his when I lit the lamp against the early dark, sleet driving against the little pane.

"The shade, the shade, remove it," he said, breaking the seal.

Reaching into the depths for the letters, he edged them out as warily as if the yellowed envelopes might turn to pollen. The first letter he unfolded was written on music paper, the words winging free of the staves.

For a moment I stood and wondered, then with a salute he vaguely returned, I left him with the letters. "Gwyneth," it must have read, "Gwyneth, I sit here at my desk trying to think, compose, but every note climbs to our rock, every phrase is the curve of your lips; the rhythm, your strong, free stride, the beat, my wild pulse, a pulse I feel as I hold the little pebble, hold fast as to each moment with you. Your hair is moist and salty with the sea, I am in your arms . . ."

On The Air Allan Sangster

► THIS, written in the no-man's-land of the spring change, when the winter programs have not quite gone and the summer ones have not quite arrived, may be merely half a column. However, better, or at least different, things are in store for the coming months, so rest content.

It is hardly news any more, perhaps, but still of interest, that Canadian Broadcasting Corporation programs carried

off ten of the thirty-seven awards at the Annual Exhibition of Radio Programs at Ohio State University. These awards included five firsts; one for Drama to "Stage Fifty," one for "In Search of Citizens," and one for "In Search of Ourselves." A special award went to CBC Wednesday Night for "its courageous experiments with radio themes, techniques and writing, and for the excellence of its music and production."

Should I hang my head in shame? Perhaps, but I don't. Honorable mentions went to two programs to which this column gave scallions . . . to the Junior League of Toronto's "Sounds Fun" and to Mary Grannan's "Maggie Muggins" series.

One reflects that in this contest the CBC is in open competition with the major American networks, the least of which has five times as much to spend on programming as the Corporation has. One reflects also that each of these American competitors has available (in quantity) at least ten times the talent which is on hand here. One reflects that not one award, not so much as a lowly honorable mention, went to any privately produced or sponsored Canadian program, and one wonders where is the Canadian Association of Broadcasters in all this; why have not the private stations' "public service" programs been well up near the top of the list? Finally one reflects that the CBC's ten awards put it second only to NBC, which beat it by only one, and one bows in gratitude and admiration to the Gentlemen of Jarvis Street.

Our bow would be lower and without mockery, however, if they were to stop betraying their trust to the Canadian people and make all stations, no matter who owns them, conform to the regulations respecting commercial time. CIBC's two afternoon soap operas are still (May eleventh) using upwards of two hundred seconds of plugs. The regulations still permit only ninety seconds.

We were most enthusiastic over the recent Wednesday Night performance, by the CBC Light Opera Company, of *The Mikado*. Some of our satisfaction no doubt came from the fact that several months ago we asked for just such an uncut production, and we were happy when it came along. But we were pleased also by the quality of what we heard—the music spirited and tuneful, the actors well-chosen and well-trained, the whole thing in the best Savoy tradition—or as close as a radio performance could approach. We hope that both public and CBC thought that the result was worth the effort, and that we shall have more complete presentations of the Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas. But (seems I am just a born carper), must there have been a double cast? What sort of training are our singers getting, if not one can be found who can assume both singing and speaking roles?

CBC Times for May 14 carries an unusual and interesting article: a note by Benjamin Britten, the composer, on the CBC production of his own opera *Peter Grimes*. Here are some of the highlights of his remarks: "The performance made its impact largely through an extremely simple and intelligent production . . . He (the producer, Terence Gibbs) was the driving force behind the whole undertaking . . . No production, however good, could have been so effective had not the musical side been really well thought out, carefully rehearsed and executed with unusual talent . . . The ability of this conductor, Geoffrey Waddington, came as a complete surprise to me: he was first-rate."

Such whole-hearted approval from a composer of Mr. Britten's standing is very gratifying; when one remembers how ornery and hard to satisfy composers are, especially

in productions of their own works, it is almost miraculous. But still, Mr. Britten, it ill behooves you to show quite so much surprise. Finally, though we must not sound our personal horn too loudly, if you will turn back to last November's *Canadian Forum* you will find that we approved too.

Among recent new arrivals the Dominion Network's Documentary Series "Radio Looks Back at the Last Fifty Years" is decidedly worth mentioning. The hour-long episodes are heard Tuesday nights at 8.30 EDT, the lively scripts are by Lister Sinclair, and production is by J. Frank Willis. This sort of retrospective survey is a natural for radio, and in these expert hands the significant events and changes of the last half-century in the fields of World Affairs, Science, Leisure, Power, and The Home (those are the episode's titles) come to life most effectively. This is definitely one of the many programs which should be repeated during afternoon hours, preferably on Trans-Canada.

Another which I like is the Friday night 8.00 p.m. EDT Trans-Canada series called "Tales of the Minstrels." These programs present . . . I quote the CBC Times . . . "the home-made hand-me-downs in words and music" with "CBC Balladeer" Ed McCurdy as singing narrator and an acting cast which dramatizes the ballad stories. Mr. McCurdy sings pleasantly as usual (but why won't the CBC give someone else an occasional chance at this kind of work?) and production is again in Mr. Willis's skilled hands. Those hands, it might be noted, are among the most skilled in Canadian radio, and it is good to have Mr. Willis again actively producing after too long an absence.

Speaking of absences, this is now the ninth consecutive column to be written by your regular correspondent. He is now going to take a rest and you are going to be given some different opinions on Canadian radio—those of three eminent radio-writers, poets, novelists, broadcasters, actors, editors, and critics. You make up your own mind on which of these terms is applicable to which. The July column will be written by Len Peterson, the August one by Lister Sinclair, the September one by Ronald Hambleton. To all of these gentlemen I offer, in advance, my deepest thanks. I shall think kindly of them, too, in midsummer, bowed over a hot typewriter while I bask upon some sylvan lake. "Ah, suckers," I shall perhaps murmur affectionately, but only, of course, to the fishes which come up upon my line.

Film Review

D. Mosdell

► OF COURSE, IT MAY BE advancing senility that makes us say "Disney? No, thank you," nowadays, as if somebody had offered us a bag of striped bullseyes, or some of those pastel-tinted candy wafers with mottoes on them, that taste like bad perfume. Surely, we thought, as we sat grimly enduring *Cinderella*, and remembered how willingly in 1938 we had seen five performances of *Snow White*, surely Disney has deteriorated—or we have. Were his colors always as crude as this, his animals as relentlessly cute, his romantic bits as nauseatingly vulgar and sentimental? Perhaps we are wrong; certainly the children in the audience at *Cinderella* seemed to be responding as enthusiastically to Gus-Gus the mouse as we did to the turtles and raccoons in *Snow White*; and perhaps they will be as shudderingly haunted by the wicked stepmother's face as we were by that pair of black vultures hovering ominously against an apple-green sky.

But for us, at any rate, the only time the old magic and excitement worked its spell in *Cinderella* was when the fairy pumpkin-coach went sweeping along to the Royal Ball, and again, fleetingly, with the flashes of red from the pennons and the undersides of the cloaks when the King's horsemen were racing to catch Cinderella on her way home from the ball. Disney can still draw a mean castle; but his increasing fondness for neon-tube blue combined with shocking pink has almost blotted out the muted charm of his pleasantly mysterious landscapes. Sickeningly transit gloria Disney . . .

"People are staying away from *The Last Days of Dolwyn* by the thousands," wailed the final ads in our local papers. "Why?" Such a *cri du coeur* from a bruised box-office strikes us as both comic and ill-advised. *Dolwyn* is not a picture to delight the millions; fine as it is, it has some bad flaws. Those who appreciate the slow, almost poetic development of the first half of the picture, with the rich, satisfying panorama of the Welsh hills, the long silences, broken only by flurries of melodious but totally incomprehensible Welsh speech, and the affectionate handling of the village itself, are likely to resent the imported melodrama of the final sequences. Not that villages like Dolwyn are incapable of melodramas; your simple rustics, while they may be warm-hearted, like children, and naive, like children, are also quite likely to be greedy and brutal, like children. But to be convincing, the drama should spring from the presiding genius of the place, in conflict either with itself or some outside influence. In *The Last Days of Dolwyn* the villagers are too passive, too much like their own sheep, and the villainy of Emlyn Williams' Davis is too farcical, too close to a parody of itself, for us to take the struggle seriously as a conflict between credible human beings. *Dolwyn* is, in fact, one film which might be improved by seeing the last half first, and getting the improbabilities over with. In any case, you shouldn't miss the Welsh preacher's sermon—entirely in Welsh—on the stirring subject of Salome and John the Baptist; nor the innkeepers' very Welsh interest in theological argument, water that comes from taps, and poached pheasant; or, most of all, Dame Edith Evans' performance as Merri, who, in her natural dignity and shrewdness comes closest of all to showing us what Welsh country folk are like at their best. See *Dolwyn*, if you can; and meanwhile, somebody really ought to remind our local theatre manager that virtue is its own reward.

Last week we caught up with *Intruder in the Dust*, from the William Faulkner novel. The usual complaint when a novel is transferred to the screen is that the movies leave too much out, that they oversimplify. *Intruder in the Dust*, however, is what you might call a literary film; that is, the connection between the novel and the picture is too close. The success of any so-called "realistic" movie depends on how lifelike the characters are, and how much what they say sounds totally natural and unrehearsed. The more they can express what they feel and think without using words at all, the better. In this film, Miss Haversham is a good example of a character who conveys, in film terms, her attitude as a white woman in the South toward the Negro; simply by being herself, Eunice Haversham, feeling sympathy for Lucas Beauchamp, falsely accused of murdering a white man; and contempt for the mob of her own friends and neighbors who gather in the town square hoping for a lynching. John Stevens, on the other hand, who defends Beauchamp, talks practically all the time, pointing morals, generalizing about whites and Negroes, analyzing his own attitude, talking about mob psychology, and finally, sucking thoughtfully at his pipe—in the movies, pipes are for philosophers—says, as he watches Beauchamp amble across the street, "There goes the guardian of my conscience."

As long as Stevens isn't around, sounding off on this and that, *Intruder in the Dust* is a fine movie, and tells you more about the South and the people who live there than anything since *All the King's Men*. But Stevens is Faulkner, the omniscient author, and he belongs in the novel, not in the film. Nevertheless, *Intruder in the Dust* is good entertainment, and far more thoughtful than the usual run of films, like *Lost Boundaries*, or *Home of the Brave*, which the Industry keeps billing as frank, courageous, daring exposés of race prejudice.

Recordings

Milton Wilson

► SOMEWHAT RESERVED and uncommunicative, Chopin's *Cello Sonata* has never been a popular work. But, although obviously less important than the two great piano sonatas, it deserves to be heard—both for its own real merits and as a foretaste of the sort of music Chopin might have written had he lived longer. The passion is faded, the melancholy subdued and Brahmsian, the dance rhythms reminiscent rather than immediate; but, while it lacks the excitement of Chopin's best large-scale works, the sonata is by no means dull, and shows Chopin's craftsmanship at its subtlest and surest. A recent Victor 45 offers it performed excellently by Edmund Kurtz, cello, and Arthur Balsam, piano. The sound of the piano is somewhat muffled.

More brilliantly recorded is Artur Schnabel's performance of the eight pieces which make up Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, also on a Victor 45. The strength and enthusiasm of *Aufschwung* is given a little alien feverishness perhaps, and its *tranquillo* section could be more tranquil, but one need make few reservations about this superb performance. The set is particularly welcome, as the suite itself, although near the summit of nineteenth century piano music, has been generally neglected by the recording companies.

The broadcast performances this winter by Guido Cantelli and the NBC Symphony impressed me less than I had expected, but the performance recorded on a new Victor 45 set of Haydn's *Symphony No. 93* is very exciting indeed, with a continuity and tension that one associates with Toscanini himself. The orchestra plays with its usual cleanliness and strength, and is well recorded.

The Books They Gave Me

Clare McAllister

► I WAS TWELVE years old. I sat reading with great satisfaction:

"First time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write . . .
The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead . . .
The third, upon my lips, was folded down
In perfect purple state! Since when, indeed,
I have been proud, and said, 'My love, my own.'"

Since when, indeed . . . ! Aaaaah! This was something you could get your soul into. "In perfect, purple state . . . since when, indeed!"

Or, turning the pages of my *Selections from Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, I might pause to sniff the Russia leather

cover and admire the gold-edged leaves. (I have a hunch that the Mrs. Wooten who gave it to me, gave more consideration to the costliness of the cover as making it a suitable present for the Mayor's little daughter, than to the passionate outpourings of the "Sonnets from the Portuguese." At that, she might have looked inside without a sniff of disapprobation: to poetry a little leeway was allowed.) What with having again got past the beauty of the cover, I might hit on another favorite, "The Lady's Yes":

"Yes," I answered you last night;
"No!" this morning, sir I say;
Colors seen by candle-light
Will not look the same by day. . . .

Yet the sin is on us both—
Time to dance is not to woo

Learn to win a lady's faith,
Nobly, as the thing is high;
Bravely, as for life and death—
With a loyal gravity."

Now, gazing at the books they give to my daughter, I find such titles as *Getting to Know the Birds*; *Operas Every Child Should Know*; *Growing Up in New Zealand*; *George Carver, Boy Scientist*; *The Chinese Children Next Door* and *Hickory Sam*, which may sound, hopefully, less didactic, but whose aim is to tell how a boy lived in the time of Lincoln. Of course, there is also *The Children's Holiday Book of Verse*, but the titles are things like *The Greedy Fox*; *Bruce Speaks to His Troops Before Bannockburn*; *Heigh, Ho! the Holly*, and *The Wind in Frolic*. (Heigh, Ho! indred. No perfect, purple passion there!) I see they've also given her some collections of folklore, but I've got a feeling that their reason was rather because "a child should have a knowledge of the tales from the childhood of the race," rather than out of any feeling that these were good stories. In fact, thinking it over, I'm wondering if, in those far-off days of my youth they were as busy as reputed in improving children and moralizing at them, or are we much busier at that project now? It seems to me fewer specialized books for children were written when I was young, and one was earlier let loose on adult fare. My daughter tells me they won't let her into the adult section of the public library.

Of course, going back again, I've got to admit that, in addition to E. B. Browning, they gave me my deceased cousin's almost complete set of Elsie Dinsmore books, and, I suppose, "moral" was, and is, the word for Elsie. Elsie wouldn't play a waltz on the piano on Sunday, even when her papa demanded it, because Elsie knew that that would be a sin. And they gave me *What Katy Did*, and certainly Katy learned, in the course of the story, to be a more unselfish girl, and to respect her crosspatch aunt, who was bringing up Katy's brothers and sisters. (Did Katy have seven of 'em, or nine? Just can't remember!)

Still more improving was a book of temperance verse cast in Scots dialect, and particularly moving I found "Faither's Awa' Wif":

"What waefu' news is this I hear? Oh, faither, can it be
That ye're awa' wi't, an' ance mair the slave o' barley
bree?"

Broken thy obligation, tae, that solemn promise given
Within the sacred circle, and before the face o' heav'n.
Ah me, 'twill be an unco change—an awfu' thocht to
think—

Oor hame, a paradise on yirth, a' flooded o'er wi'
drink."

As a counterbalance to these improving thoughts, though still with a broadening Scots influence, I had a friend who spouted ballads, such as:

"I wish I were where Helen lies
Night and day on me she cries;
Oh that I were where Helen lies;
On fair Kirkconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms fair Helen dropt
And died to succour me!"

What glorious, curdling passions we shared as she mouthed the thrilling words! My daughter's peers and equals tend to ballads about "dear hearts and gentle people," or else chant "Ragmop," without end.

Getting away from the pious or stirring ballad, we had Tennyson to thrill us with the sorrows of "He cometh not, and my heart is weary." We had books with horrific black smudgy woodcuts, illustrating German or Roumanian fairy tales. A particular treasure was a little Birthday Book, a flower for each birthdate, and a verse, besides, such as:

"River of all my hopes thou wert and art
The current of thy being bears my heart;
Whether it sweep along in shine or shade,
By barren rocks or banks in flowers arrayed,
Foam with the storm, or glide in soft repose,
In that deep channel, Love unswerving flows."

I don't find any Love with a capital "L" in my daughter's books.

In other words, I don't find any history, such as that I used to revel in, in that fat old volume *Heroines of History*, illustrated with handsome steel engravings. The descriptions of Cleopatra's revels with Antony were really stimulating, to say the least. At the climax, one came to "It is as two jealous lovers, not bound together by the sacred tendrils of an honest affection, but united by an unholy passion, that Antony and Cleopatra are from this time to be regarded." . . . "Faults and vices she exhibited, which, revolting as they were, need not be excused in her, for they were characteristic of her age. Though her virtues were mental only, they deserve to be remembered." There's a lot about Roman rule in my daughter's history books, but no such understatements as this.

It may be that my daughter is getting her romantic stimulus from the movies—and why on earth do I say "maybe," since it is quite obvious she does? I doubt, however, if the stimulus of mere visual imagery has that lingering, romantic flavor, that tongue-tingling, heart-stirring effect of repeated assonance and alliteration that was so exciting in Elizabeth Barrett Browning. I say was so exciting, for certainly now I should be driven to mirth, rather rapidly, if I repeated to myself, on the verge of slumber, "The third was folded down in perfect, purple state."

For me, for whom H-bombs seem imminent, perhaps MacNeice now best fits the mood, alas!:

"In the sun-peppered meadow the shepherds are old,
Their flutes are broken and their tales are told,
And their ears are deaf then the guns unfold
Their new philosophy over the world.
May come up with pollen of death,
May come up with cordite,
May come up with a chinagraph
And may come up with a stopwatch."

But there is an age for a different dreaming. My daughter's twelfth birthday is coming up. I don't think I'll cull the book stores for the latest in the "11-14 range of reading interest," say, something on the Origin of Man's Family Tree, or Symphonies Every Girl Should Hum. I don't even think I'll get one of those adventure tales carefully selected for the teen-ager. (Note inside dust-jacket, "While extending the Child's horizon of interest and increasing the fund of his knowledge of Uldobian culture by the unravelling of fanciful adventures, this book will not be found to be unwholesomely over-stimulating.") No, I'm going to hunt for a volume, preferably slim and with a ribbon marker down the middle, of *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. I'd like it in Russia leather, because of the smell, but I guess I'd settle for purple morocco, at that. After all, the poem's the thing!

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor: Mr. C. C. Lingard in his leading article in your April issue, "Canadian-Chinese Checkers," has said exactly what needs to be said about the situation in China. It is a pleasure to peruse such a succinct summary, and I can agree wholeheartedly with the significant conclusions that he reaches.

Asia is in a state of ferment, whether we like it or not. And as Professor Fairbank has so clearly demonstrated, "China was bound to experience shattering revolutionary movements . . . with or without the aid of Marxism and the Comintern."

If we wish to compete successfully with Communist ideology in Asia we must adopt positive and constructive measures. Doctrinaire anti-communism is poor equipment for this task. A static policy will not meet the crisis of Asia in revolution. Can our foreign policy become sufficiently dynamic and adaptable to cope successfully with these new problems? Rigid and blind adherence to preconceived notions will doom us to failure.

I too have expressed the hope that China might become a meeting-ground between East and West, rather than a battlefield. The Chinese people will assuredly not adopt Communism unaltered. With constructive leadership they may achieve a synthesis of East and West that will make a vital contribution to the life of Asia and to the peace of the world. What positive contribution can we Canadians make?

Herbert Bruce Collier, Edmonton, Alta.

The Editor: You might be interested in passing on the following item to Hyperbole Prat with reference to his sustained grumble in the April issue.

I am informed by an acquaintance at the Toronto Reference Library:

- (a) that the hand-dryer in the men's wash-room is fixed and operable now;
- (b) the check-room attendant has been heard to utter an unforced pleasantry.

This response will go far no doubt toward restoring the author's confidence in the power of the printed word.

John Nicol, Toronto, Ont.

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Spanish Hilltop

Here, on top of a hill, is El Greco
The Greek, called "the painter of Toledo."

Come closer Francisco, let us watch his face,
The egg-shaped brow, the ragged dirty beard,
His fingers with a kind of separate grace,
His eyes, Francisco, dark and greatly to be feared.

Some say a kind of witchcraft guides his brush,
Familiar of the evil one, he walks at night.
Indeed the Church Inquisitors have questioned—Hush
Francisco! Keep down, the moon is full and far too bright.

The Cardinal Nino de Guevara, Hernando said,
Has had his portrait done by him, the Greek from Crete,
A sombre thing, he says, despite its vivid red,
And not the Cardinal so much as Greco's own conceit.

He paints Toledo now, the streets we know,
And enters in our houses like a fear that fills
The heart. Francisco, it comes to me we must not go,
But stay and sleep tonight in these high hills.

Alfred W. Purdy

Reflections of a Devoted Menial

I wish I were a pet octopus on roller-skates.
I am apparently unlimber and quite sensile.
My employers did not advertise
For a Hindu god with a dozen pairs of hands,
A neat appearance,
And the knack of being in several places
At one time.
But that, I feel,
Was what they meant.

J. L. Smallwood.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

W. E. GREENING, whose article, "Labor Strife at Lake St. John" appeared in our issue of August, 1948, lives in Montreal . . . HILDA KIRKWOOD, of Brampton, Ontario, has contributed poems to various publications . . . A. W. DAVEY lives in Regina, Saskatchewan. His drawing, "The Harvester," was reproduced in our April issue . . . JOHN S. MORGAN, of the School of Social Work, University of Toronto, is a frequent contributor . . . EMILE GLEN lives in New York City.

RESEARCH GROUP FORMS

A number of people interested in engaging themselves in fundamental research on Canadian social, economic, and political problems will meet in the Kingston (Ontario) Public Library on June 10, 1950, to discuss the possibility of establishing some sort of national association. It is expected that a number of small groups will be formed (of perhaps, one, two, or three members), each working on a topic of its own choice, with a national committee acting to maintain liaison. The association will not be connected in any way with any political party or with any other organization. Further information may be obtained by writing to Professor H. Scott Gordon, 43 Delaware Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario.

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TURNING NEW LEAVES

► WHEN THE LONG NIGHT of the Fascist dictatorship was at last at an end, what was reported to be a vigorous cultural renaissance suddenly got under way in Italy. Motion pictures directed by Rossellini and de Sica soon began to build up an audience abroad, while a number of Italian books, including these four recent novels,* have been published in English translation during the past few years.

It is still difficult to say, however, whether Italy's post-war literature is all that it has been cracked up to be. One English reviewer wrote not long ago that the Italian fiction selected for translation since the end of the war has not actually been representative, but has in most cases been chosen because of its similarity to the successful Italian films. These motion pictures have been in many ways admirable, but I think that it is clear that a fiction chosen largely to reflect their tendencies would have some limitations. A good deal of the new Italian fiction has, moreover, been written by men who did not go into exile, and who were consequently cut off by the Fascist censorship from much that was happening to literature elsewhere. These writers are now obviously attempting, often rather awkwardly and uncertainly, to make up for lost time, and to absorb alien literary techniques which in some cases have already run their course. Such American novelists as Hemingway, Dos Passos and Steinbeck have apparently become extremely influential in postwar Italy. It seems to me that better models might have been discovered without too much difficulty.

Alberto Moravia has been called Italy's most important modern novelist. He is the author of more than a dozen books, only four of which have so far been translated into English. His most recent novel, *The Woman of Rome*, has been extravagantly praised by some American reviewers, and has been on the best-seller lists for a number of weeks.

I might as well say at once that in my opinion a great many American readers have been had: *The Woman of Rome* is one of the dulllest novels I've read in a long time. It is the fictional autobiography of a few years in the life of a young Roman prostitute, Adriana, who drifts into that profession by way of a disappointing love affair, and because she is a passive, easily-influenced and sensual girl. Adriana quickly becomes the focal point in a desperate struggle involving a police official, a murderer, and a young student, whom she loves. The three men die violently, while Adriana survives to renounce prostitution and prepare to bear the illegitimate child which the murderer has fathered. This climax, which would be at best melodramatic and not too probable, is handled in so perfunctory a fashion that it is tempting to conclude that Moravia finally grew bored with the whole business—and, indeed, who could blame him?

In a brief preface to *The Woman of Rome*, Moravia says that he had to decide whether to render Adriana's thoughts, feelings and speech in her own "clumsy, poor dialect," the language of the streets, or in "the language of literature." He chose the second course; but unfortunately this decision also led him to endow Adriana with a degree of perception and a tendency to introspection which are quite unbeliev-

able. Even more disastrous, however, is the attitude of remoteness, almost of contempt, on the part of the author, which seemed to me quite noticeable in the preface. Adriana is, I think, a literary figure, and not a human being, largely because Moravia cannot accept the significance in itself of her existence.

A Tale of Poor Lovers is a much less tedious novel, though its conception is depressingly unimaginative. It has a close affinity with the Italian films—we enter immediately into a world of dreary, seemingly endless city streets, teeming poverty, struggle and violence, a stubborn will to live—and it looks for its literary model to the social panoramas of John Dos Passos. *A Tale of Poor Lovers* is the story of a slum street in Florence, the Via Del Corno, where politics and sex proliferate. The time is the early twenties, before the opponents of Fascism have finally been driven underground. Pratolini handles a cast of nearly sixty characters very skillfully, and manages to make them and a myriad of complications and sub-plots both interesting and distinctive. There are flashes of irony and humor, yet at bottom *A Tale of Poor Lovers* is merely a better than average example of a pretty threadbare sort of political-social novel. The Fascists, it is true, are depicted as human beings; but they are men damned from the beginning, the apolitical majority of the street's inhabitants merit little more than the author's indifference, the handful of Communist Party members are in the end canonized.

Elio Vittorini's *In Sicily* was first published openly in Italy about a decade ago. Then the censors realized that it had political implications, so novel and author went underground, where the book ran through several clandestine editions. The English translation has been graced with a two-page introduction by Ernest Hemingway which is a masterpiece of irrelevancies. Hemingway uses his small space to attack that "desert where only such cactus as New York literary reviews grow dry and sad," in contrast to the "rain" which the creative writer composes out of a long list of things (including "chamber music and chamber pots, negative and positive Wassermans," to give some idea of Mr. Hemingway's whimsy). The first thing to say about Mr. Vittorini is that he would be well advised to look for a new sponsor.

As for *In Sicily* itself, it is a brief novel, really a series of oblique conversations and casual incidents, from which a modern allegory is evidently intended to emerge. Partly on impulse, a young man, Silvestro, returns from northern Italy to his boyhood home in Sicily, where his mother is now living alone, deserted by her erratic husband. Silvestro has been "haunted by abstract furies . . . some sort of furies concerning the doomed human race"; but after a few days in Sicily, he returns to the mainland, strengthened and encouraged.

What Mr. Vittorini appears to be saying in this novel—to express its theme in a very compressed form—is that we must somehow break through fraudulent and distorted appearances, and find in simplicity and a clear view of reality new truths by which to live. This has been a fairly common theme in modern literature—most powerfully expressed by D. H. Lawrence—and it is still worthy of exploitation, though it sometimes skirts dangerous ground. In *In Sicily*, however, the theme never seems quite legitimately a part of the whole novel, and it is expressed in so maddeningly artificial a style—reminiscent of the worst pseudo-primitivism of Steinbeck and Saroyan—that I found it doubly suspect. At the same time Mr. Vittorini has an eye for small things and incidental characters, and it will be interesting to see what he writes when he comes out from under the shadow of a bankrupt American school.

**The Woman of Rome*: Alberto Moravia; Saunders (Secker & Warburg); pp. 390; \$3.25.

A Tale of Poor Lovers: Vasco Pratolini; British Book Service (Hamish Hamilton); pp. 366; \$3.00.

In Sicily: Elio Vittorini; Book Center (New Directions); pp. 163; \$3.25.

Moravia: Elio Plisano; Longmans, Green (John Lehmann); pp. 371; \$6.00.

By far the best of the four novels, Ennio Flaiano's *Mariam*, has received the least publicity. It is a book about the Abyssinian War, or more exactly, about the period immediately after the war has ended. A young Italian officer, whose truck has broken down, sets out on foot for a nearby camp. He meets a native woman, seduces her, and then, accidentally but with a kind of inevitability, kills her. He buries the body, and goes on, almost "serenely" as soon as the first shock has worn off. For "once I had buried the corpse I had done my duty toward the others and now I must continue to do it in silence. The woman did not count, only my guilt toward the others."

His crime has in fact awakened the young officer to that modern guilt and despair which seems as ambiguous in its moral implications as it is universal. His serenity does not last for long. Soon he notices a rash on his hand, and begins to fear that the woman may have been suffering from leprosy. He becomes aware of the corruption and guilt infesting the whole enterprise of the Italian army. The landscape, deadly with sun and disease, and ravaged with memories of the murdered woman, becomes a thing of living evil. He attempts to return to Italy, and stands on the verge of endlessly repeating the original crime.

Yet he comes through his torment, to an ironic and terrible conclusion. "The killing of Mariam now seemed to me an inevitable crime, but not for the reasons that had led me to commit it. More than a crime, in fact, it appeared to me like a crisis, an illness, which would protect me forever by revealing me to myself. I now loved my victim and could only fear that she might leave me."

Mr. Flaiano writes as though he had never heard of those American novelists who so plague his fellow-countrymen. Yet, in the only right way, his novel sets off literary echoes. While I was reading *Mariam*, I kept recalling Joseph Conrad's famous short story, *Heart of Darkness*, and indeed a whole group of modern novelists—from Kafka to the young American Saul Bellow—who have been concerned with the problem of guilt and the even more difficult attempt to define the nature of the individual once he has been cast back upon himself. Mr. Flaiano uses a firm, precise and intelligent style to good advantage, and I think that his novel is altogether an impressive achievement.

ROBERT L. WEAVER



THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S: Abraham Joshua Heschel; The Book Center (Henry Schuman Inc.); pp. 109; \$3.50.

Between 1933 and 1945, a two-thousand-year-old culture was extinguished in Europe. The ancient Jewish communities were blotted out so thoroughly that to study them now is not much different from studying the dead civilizations of the Aztecs and the Incas. Only fragmentary evidence remains, and the recollections of those who themselves will soon be forgotten.

Who were these people? What did they stand for? What made their role important in the history of mankind? Dr. Heschel tries to answer in this very brief book, actually an essay. The book's sub-title—*The Inner World of the Jew in East Europe*—is indicative of the approach.

The term "inner world" was a deliberate choice, for, hemmed in by ghetto walls and prejudice, the Jews turned inward for salvation. To compensate for external misery, the concept of a Chosen People flowered and became inextricably bound up with the religious life, which is to say the only life. The Sacred Writing became part of that life, and study and religious devotion superseded all other activities in importance. It is no wonder, then, that literacy became the mark of Judaism in Europe at a time when the much greater gentile populations which surrounded it could neither read nor write. "There is a price to be paid by the Jew. He has to be exalted in order to be normal. In order to be a man he has to be more than a man. To be a people, the Jews have to be more than a people."

Dr. Heschel's book is less an historical or critical account than an act of devotion. The publisher's blurb on the dust wrapper is for once not an exaggeration when it describes the book as imbued with "poetic passion." Yet, even though seemingly idealized, it explains how it was possible for a tiny minority to survive for so long in the face of savage persecution, until annihilation was raised to the scientific plane.

The book itself is a charming piece of the publisher's art. It is attractively printed and beautifully illustrated by Ilya Schor's wood engravings.

A. Andrus.

THE ENCHAFED FLOOD: W. H. Auden; Random House; pp. 154; \$3.00.

This is Auden's first full-length critical work. According to the dust-jacket, it tackles nothing less than "the romantic spirit." The sources and examples, as usual, run all the way from Genesis to an Addams' cartoon; but, as suggested by the sub-title, *The Romantic Iconography of the Sea*, the main emphasis falls on works like *The Ancient Mariner*, *Moby Dick*, and *The Hunting of the Snark*.

According to the argument, the classical image of society is the city, the true community of individuals. Opposed to the city, on the one hand, is the sea, alpha, the image of life-giving but also destroying power; and, on the other hand, the desert, omega, the image of death and decadence, the place to which unrespectable Ishmael is banished. In the romantic period, mechanization and laissez-faire politics destroy the true community and endanger the individual; and the Newtonian universe, with its wholly transcendent Architect and Judge, mind-body dualism, and aesthetic dichotomy between matter and medium, recapitulates the rift in metaphysical terms. The romantic image of society is consequently the level desert itself, and Ishmael becomes the image of the true individual. Since it is the universal desert which he is now trying to escape, the only path left is down to the sea. Reduced, then, to tapping his inner spiritual resources, the romantic poet inevitably becomes his own epic hero. And when at the same time he dabbles, under the auspices of a wholly immanent God, in "a suggestive magic including . . . object and subject," he runs the risk of Satanic presumption, of thinking himself self-generated from his own imagination. Ahab's defiant despair is the typical result of the romantic artist's exploration of this possibility.

A scholar no doubt would find a lot of this (a) old stuff and (b) over-simplified. But some sort of simplification is probably always necessary for getting at the new stuff. The great virtue of books like this one is the big jump they get beyond the clogging particulars and basic incoherence of the conventional scholarly approach. The total effect of Auden's argument is wrought with a compactness which makes it impossible to summarize with justice anyway. The newness of the stuff is in the peculiar synthesis which makes up Auden's approach. He applies with considerable subtlety,

for example, the Kierkegaardian categories (the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious), and concepts of dread and despair, to the larger aspects of the romantic situation. But he does not hypostatize romanticism into one pole of an eternal dialectic in the soul of man. A complementary Marxist sensibility anchors the discussion firmly to the historical context. The general approach to symbols certainly owes a good deal to Jung; but, by an ingenious hook-up, Freud is rung in too: "the Oedipus fantasy" (for example) "is a representation in aesthetic terms of the fantasy of being a self-originating god. . . ."

In some ways, the book perhaps raises more questions than it answers, but then it is simply that kind of book. Auden's (until now unfortunately fugitive) criticism has always tended to the series of short, clear, self-contained *pensées* and no words wasted on further explanations. This time he manages to retain the quality of the *pensée* along with—in spite of a few loose ends and excessive ellipses—an overall unity of design. A sort of one big *pensée*. If, with his rare gift for combining brilliance, clarity, and saying the sensible thing, Auden as a critic has always been one of the best "of his kind," *The Enchafed Flood* ought to earn him some recognition as one of the best of any kind.

Duncan Robertson.

THE DESIGN OF DEMOCRACY: Laurence Stapleton; Oxford; pp. 301; \$4.50.

In spite of its fine balance this book is unlikely to please either the right or the left, and perhaps least of all the centre. Not that Miss Stapleton is merely a harsh critic, for she finds some good almost everywhere, even among the Russians, and her gentle persuasiveness is quite convincing. She never gets lost in generalizations, but makes concrete suggestions for improvements in the working of democracy. Her concise definitions of terms, as in her differentiation between capitalism and free enterprise, hold her ideas severely to the line. She can make your spine tingle as she depicts the stark horror of corruption in politics, and then she comforts you with a vision of a smoothly working world government.

If only public men would use her criterion of applying the fundamentals of democracy to economic problems! How many useless political quarrels would be prevented! And her insistence that power must be responsible cuts the props from many current political ideas and practices.

This book is clear, but not simple, often exciting, and a thoughtful study of it would be rewarding to both private citizens and public men—providing they are interested in rewards in the realm of ideas.

Ellen Rogers.

SERGEANT SHAKESPEARE: Duff Cooper; Clarke, Irwin; pp. 100; \$2.00.

This is a pleasant and brief book. Its author, Sir Duff Cooper, D.S.O., was Minister of Information in Churchill's coalition government of 1940. He has published several books, including a fine historical study of Talleyrand.

His thesis is that Shakespeare before engaging in his career as actor and playwright in London spent some time in the army, probably as a non-commissioned officer. In a sense, the book is therefore a contribution to biographical Shakespearean criticism. And the evidence presented is (granted that Shakespeare was more likely a soldier than a sailor, or lawyer, or councillor), on the whole, not more convincing than that of several similar works. But judging the book in this way would be failing to see its real point. Here the manner of treatment is all important. Common-sense lightly passes into fantasy, and fantasy back to some shrewd observation, until in the end the author exclaims: "Have I

convinced you?—I have almost convinced myself," and tells us that Shakespeare "might have been . . . a beggar-man like Homer, or even, like Villon, a thief. . . . He remains an enchantment. . . ."

So does this book, in its small way. Its thesis, I feel, is a wonderful pretence or, if you like, a frame for writing it. If some of the detailed interpretations are unacceptable, others encourage us to re-examine some of Shakespeare's greatest scenes, and not to acquiesce in the standard explanations of Iago's villainy and Brutus' behavior toward Cassius in the quarrel scene, to select but two outstanding items. Above all, the book demonstrates how Shakespeare with his understanding and sympathy for the soldier's basic problems, and his knowledge of the psychology of military relationships can exercise a very special appeal upon those who have seen army life.

F. David Hoeniger.

ALBERT EINSTEIN: Leopold Infeld; S. J. Reginald Saunders (Scribners); pp. 132; \$2.75.

Compared to the spate of pseudo-scientific explanations of the Einstein theory in the twenties by the most confused segment of the hack-writing fraternity this volume of the Twentieth Century Library comes as a fresh spring breeze. Dr. Infeld, of the University of Toronto, and no mean mathematician in his own right, has done a splendid job of outlining the two theories in simple language. He has probably gone to the opposite extreme in being non-mathematical but even at that this brief treatise is not one which can be skimmed through lightly. The Newtonian world we live in every day is so far removed from Einstein's conception of the universe that it takes considerable readjustment in our thinking to grasp the essentials of the relativity and quantum theories.

Dr. Infeld as a one-time collaborator of Einstein is also in a position to give us an insight into the man and his place in the scientific world. Readers will also be amused to learn that the relativity theory was bitterly attacked in the early days as being most unsound because it was un-German.

John A. Dewar.

SCOTTSBORO BOY: Haywood Patterson and Earl Conrad; Doubleday; pp. 246; \$3.50.

In March, 1931, nine Negro boys, stealing a ride on a freight train in Alabama, fought with some white boys. Unfortunately for them, they won. The whites complained, and when the train reached Paint Rock, all the Negroes were arrested and charged with attacking two white prostitutes, also stealing rides. Though they had not seen the girls until arrested, they were automatically found guilty and sentenced to death. Outsiders, interested in justice, intervened and the Scottsboro case was on. The Civil Rights Congress, the International Labor Defence, church groups, and liberals all over Europe and America protested. Lawyers for the defence, from New York, were practically chased from Alabama. Justice was never attained.

This is the story told by Haywood Patterson, one of the nine, to Earl Conrad, and it is as unvarnished as it is appalling. Patterson, twice sentenced to death and then to life imprisonment, finally escaped from the living hell of Kilby prison, and is now at large, with a warrant out for his arrest. Minute details of all the trials are given. Patterson's chief bitterness is on account of his Christian mother who struggled for years to free him, and finally died, broken-hearted. When a vindictive warden snatched his Bible from him, he complained that even God wasn't strong enough to help him there. Five others were sentenced to life imprisonment with him. Their lives are finished. This should

make bitter reading for the people of this continent who smugly condemn the injustices and slave labor of Russia. The prisons of the south are a festering sore. Earl Conrad, author of *Harriet Tubman*, has accomplished a disagreeable but brave and important work.

E. McN.

DOWN THE LONG SLIDE: Tom Hopkinson; Clarke, Irwin; pp. 128; \$1.50.

IT'S SAFE IN ENGLAND: Kevin Fitzgerald; British Book Service (William Heinemann); pp. 237; \$2.00.

THE HARDING MYSTERY: A. J. Alderson; British Book Service (Falcon Press); pp. 267; \$2.00.

THE UGLY CUSTOMER: Cecil Freeman Gregg; British Book Service (Methuen); pp. 240; \$2.25.

These four books all fall roughly within the mystery or suspense category, but they are widely varied in style and subject. The one which should interest non-mystery as well as mystery readers is *Down the Long Slide*. It is a story of suspense, but it is also a story of life within a Central European country recently turned Communist. At the beginning, Brusilov, an old-guard revolutionary, is head of the State Publishing House in this unnamed country. He discovers that he is in danger of denunciation, and decides to flee while flight is possible. The story of his escape creates a believable picture of the atmosphere within a Communist state.

Most mystery-story addicts should enjoy *It's Safe in England*. Thriller rather than detective story, it is good light reading, as its sub-title, "A Story for a Journey," indicates. In the John Buchan-cum-Sapper tradition, it is filled with captures and escapes—in fact, there are a few too many captures and escapes to maintain the suspense. The plot is pretty thin, and the villains rather unbelievable, but the atmosphere of rural England is well done, and there are a wealth of characters who seem realistically British and individually interesting.

The Harding Mystery is a more orthodox British detective story. It is a little long-winded and a little too complicated, but still makes fairly acceptable reading for mystery fans.

The Ugly Customer is also British, but it reads more like a British author trying to ape the American thrillers. Cecil Freeman Gregg has turned out some thirty other mysteries—but I don't intend to haunt the book stores looking for them.

E. Fowke.

THE PINK HOUSE: Nelia Gardner White; Macmillan; pp. 311; \$3.75.

Although the title sounds like an icing concoction, and this novel was first published in the *Woman's Home Companion*, Mrs. White is more than a writer of adult fairy tales, i.e., magazine-soap-operas. This winner of the Westminster prize in 1948 has a saving grace, in that she invests her stories with adult perception, and the wisdom of one who knows human nature from deep personal experience.

The set-up is familiar, and the style, written in first person, is deceptively Louisa May Alcott (1950!), but the development of the characters themselves, and the story, becomes interesting, almost against the reader's will. It's an easy book to pick up; not so easy to put down.

The central character is a lonely, introspective girl, lame and unattractive, thrust to live among inimical relatives. This would have finished her, if it hadn't been for Aunt Poll, whose brusque manner hid wisdom and sacrifice. Through her, and her love for Paul, she learns to grow, and, more important, grow up; and to accept life, gaining as she gave to it.

Enid Sheppard.

EVERY INCH A KING: Sergia Correa Da Costa; Macmillan; pp. 212; \$3.75.

A niche in the temple of history is merited by the too-little known Pedro I, first Emperor of Brazil, and later Emperor of Portugal. So persuaded was he of the evil of absolute monarchy that he practically forced constitutional government, first on Brazil, and later on Portugal. He assured the independence of Uruguay, and earned for himself the enmity reserved for those whose thought travels in advance of that of their fellows.

When Napoleon threatened to crush Portugal, his father, John VI, had moved himself and his Court to Brazil. M. Da Costa, the author, a Brazilian diplomat, gives a sympathetic picture of the youth of Dom Pedro. He received practically no education, a loss which he resented, and from which he was careful to safeguard his children. Handsome and undisciplined, he was the ideal Anthony Hope Prince; his secretary a groom, and the treasurer of his household a former scavenger. But the man eventually defied Metetrnich and all the reactionaries of Europe in his war to establish democracy in Portugal, was also reckless of his own strength, and, having attained victory, died at the tragically early age of thirty-six.

E. McN.

ELEANOR RATHBONE: Mary Stocks; Longmans, Green; pp. 376; \$4.75.

Eleanor Rathbone (1873-1946) was the daughter of a Liverpool family which for generations had been community conscious. Following in her father's footsteps she began her public career as a social worker in Liverpool. Her experience with the underprivileged led her to the conviction that motherhood was a profession worthy of state subsidy and that the feminist demand of equal pay for equal work, rested upon the removal from the father of the full respon-

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sibility for the children's security. Elected to parliament as an independent member for the English Universities, Eleanor Rathbone championed the cause of women and pioneered persistently and intelligently for family allowances. She did not however, limit herself to England. In the international sphere she was singularly clear-sighted in her appraisal of the Spanish issue and worked untiringly on behalf of the refugees fleeing totalitarian persecution.

Mary Stocks compares her to a juggler keeping many balls in play at once. Somehow that comparison touches upon the strength and weakness of the book. The author has revealed a public woman working for causes with a facility and energy staggering to a less dynamic person but she has created a personality devoid of charm or humor or any of the little human touches which would have changed the story of a public career into the biography of a dynamic and interesting woman.

L.C.T.

THE HOUR OF FLIGHT: W. Stanley Moss; Clarke, Irwin (Harrap, London); pp. 192; \$1.50.

If I had written a note on this book when I was halfway through it (as many reviewers are said to do), I would have had little good to say. If I had given an opinion after reading four-fifths of the volume I would have had many bad things to say. I would have said, for example, that the book's foremost claim to notice is its use of an original gadget, a sort of typographical lightning stroke—

—which transfers you—where? From A to B, from now to then, hell to breakfast, or id to ego? I would have said that this is a very ordinary, but muddled story of a moron who kills his mistress, and how wrong I would have been.

Fortunately I screwed up my resolution and persisted. Now that I have finished the work I can only say that in *The Hour of Flight* Mr. Moss has produced one of the most diabolically penetrating and ingeniously constructed studies of the split personality which this reviewer has ever encountered. But, if you read it, heed this warning. Puzzling as the early chapters are, hard to take as is the series of lightning flashes, you must read the book through. Then the final flash, which is not of typography but of revelation, gets in its blinding work and makes all clear.

A.S.

SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS DATED AND OTHER ESSAYS: Leslie Hotson; Clarke, Irwin; pp. lx, 244; \$5.00.

Mr. Hotson calls himself a literary detective and offers this as his latest case-book. One can certainly add that he is our most distinguished practitioner of that scholarly art. All the problems here investigated pertain to Shakespeare's life, his work, or the events of his time. Some are minor triumphs, like the identification of William Johnson, mentioned in a document as a trustee for Shakespeare in his purchase of a Blackfriars house. By an almost intuitive gift of finding the pertinent clues in the files of the Records Office, Mr. Hotson shows Johnson to have been the host of the Mermaid tavern.

The value of the book, however, is in its title essay, one of the most sensational and significant contributions to Shakespearean studies in our time. By an examination of three of the sonnets Mr. Hotson seeks to prove that the date of these, and so presumably of the "young man" group to which they belong, must be put back to the year 1589, when Shakespeare was only twenty-five. The meaning of sonnet 107 has always been a puzzle. The line, "The mortal Moore hath her eclipse indur'de," has generally been taken as a reference to Elizabeth's death in 1603, or even more des-

perately as a reference to her "grand climacteric year," 1596. Here it is convincingly proven that the "mortal Moore" is the Armada's menacing, moon-shaped line of battle. The same period, he demonstrates, is indicated by the "pyramids" in sonnet 123. These are the obelisks raised by the Pope in Rome from 1586 to 1589. Sonnet 124, it is claimed, refers to the assassination of the Duke of Guise in 1588 and that of Henry III of France the next year. The only question that comes to mind is whether the writing of the sonnets need be ascribed so closely to the dates of the suggested events as Mr. Hotson maintains; whether, for example, "the balmie time" of sonnet 107, when "peace proclaimes Olives of endless age," need be 1589. There was peace then only in the sense of relief, and the defeat of the Armada was no nine days wonder.

It is hard to give up our accepted notions of Shakespeare's development as a poet, but by this brief and brilliant essay Mr. Hotson has assuredly forced on us such a re-assessment.

R. S. Knox.



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